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Deer hunt on Hewlett-Pachard Ranch August 12-14, 1977

Ken Morrish and I arrived at San Felipe Ranch at 3:00 PM, Friday. Within an hour Bill and Dave had provided us with a Jeep, two companions — Bob Brown and Bill's son-in-law from Paris, Jean Paul G.(?) — and we set out up Henderson Ridge. Found few deer at low elevations but Ken shot a very large forked-horn in velvet, good and fat. His tines were abnormally small.

Above the radio relay station we found lots of deer and Bob and I each took a good sized fork — both three-year olds.

Saturday morning Ernie Arbuckle replaced Jean Paul in our crew. We went back up Henderson and worked our way to the far end of the pine ridge. Ken stalked and killed a nice 3 pointer who was pecking out of a pine thicket watching Bob Brown, who played "decoy". Ken shot off-hand at the white throat patch — all he could see — and hit it dead center. Ernie took a nice fork on the way down.

Bob left at noon and Sherman Chichering took his place. Again Dave sent us up Henderson which was fine with me — there were plenty of deer up there. I shot a small 4-pointer.

San Felipe Ranch, Santa Clara Co.

Aug 12-14, 1977 (cont.) of three years, dark blue gray and very sleek. The bullet went diagonally through his chest but did not break a shoulder. The deer went down but then for a moment regained his feet lunged across a jeep trail, and over the brink of a steep wooded canyon. We found him quickly enough but it took an hour of the most exasperating work to get him 150 feet back up to the road.

On the return trip toward the ranch Sherm took a standing 100 yard off hand shot at a big jack and parried him. He followed him down into a canyon and finally finished him far, far below the rim. He gutted him out, turned him over to drain, and he went home.

Sunday morning, Aug. 14, Dave Packard, Ken and I went back with Sherm and retrieved his buck. Happily we found a jeep track 1/4 mile below the buck and were able to take him out the easy way.

Summarized statistics of what we saw from my jeep:

<u>Date & time</u>	<u>Total deer seen</u>	<u>Legal bucks seen</u>	<u>Buck kill</u>
Aug. 12, evening	135	20	3
Aug 13, morning	130	26	2
Aug 14, evening	64	8	2
	<u>329</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>7</u>

A ratio of 1 legal buck out of each 6 deer seen is remarkably good. Many of the bucks were

San Felipe Ranch, Santa Clara Co.

Aug 12-14, 1977 (cont.) Three-year olds, and barked back at the big crop of fat healthy fawns of 1974. That was a wet year with lush vegetation and I predicted that we would see that age class prominently among the bucks of 1976 and 1977, which indeed was the case.

This year and last, however, have been very poor for fawn weaning. They are generally small, rough haired, some still in spots, and survival is sure to be poor. I have never seen the forage so skinny as it was this very dry spring. Bill and Alene have sold all their cows except for a little herd of Santa Gertrudis and a bunch of Angus in one pasture. Strippping the range of livestock is one good reason they have a good deer population. Not many ranchers could afford to do it.

Besides deer we saw the following wildlife in the three half-days:

4 bobcats

1 coyote

1 raccoon

1 golden eagle

1 prairie falcon

5 or 6 coveys of quail, one only half grown.

Lots of mourning doves

Yellowstone Trout Trip Sept 3-14, 1977

Woody and I took off driving at 7 AM, Sept. 3, and reached Twin Falls, Idaho, that evening. Saw two coyotes in a grassy pasture near Elko but otherwise no wildlife. Ate Phyllis' fried chicken in the motel room for supper.

Sept. 4

Stopped at Craters of the Moon National Mon. to look around and chat with the Park Service personnel. Very neat Visitors Center. Near there we surprised a golden eagle sitting a dead cottontail on the highway.

At Island Park we had a visit with Will Godfrey and set up our return visit for some fishing Sept. 12 and 13. Will has a neat shop just across the highway from Henry's Fork.

On up the pipe near Henry's Lake we saw a dozen or so antelope on the south side of the road and a flock of sandhill cranes in a meadow on the north side.

Arrived at Mammoth Springs in the Park mid-afternoon. Registered to fish and picked up the key to our apartment at Visitors Center. Leisurely dinner and early to bed.

Sept. 5, 1977

Lower Lamar

Had breakfast with Mary Deaghen and heard about her problems with research funds and troublesome bears.

Drove to the parking lot near mouth of the Lamar and crossed the Lamar to fish the Yellowstone River on its big sweeping left curve below. In this area you are permitted to keep two fish and we want some to barbecue. Fished hard during the day without hardly moving a fish, but after 4:30 PM things began to happen. In an hour we had our two fish pieces, all between 11 and 14 inches. Both of mine were rainbow/cut hybrids but they jumped and fought like rainbows. We quit as soon as we had our fish for supper and went back to the car where we lighted the briquets in Woody's portable barbecue. Had welcome drinks while the fire got hot, then put the four trout on. Served them with a toasted roll apiece and a sliced tomato. Delicious dinner.

Sept. 6

Buffalo Ford

Went to Buffalo Ford and found the river surprisingly low. You could wade right across it in a number of places. There wasn't much

Sept 6, 1977 (cont.) of a hatch and the rise of fish was desultory but nonetheless we took 15 cuts between us, from 10 AM to 3 PM with time off for a nap after lunch. They ran from 13" to 19" — I don't recall previously seeing anything smaller than about 15" but we had several today.

A group of harlequin ducks dived and frolicked around us all day, along with an occasional transient merganser. Ospreys were patrolling the river. We saw beaver, moose and elk along the road.

Sept. 7

Upper Lamar

Parked at the little turn out west of Lamar Ranger Sta. and walked across the big grassy flat to the south sweeping bend of the Lamar River. Saw two coyotes on the flat and a band of 14 pronghorns at the west end of the valley. They tell us there is considerable winter poaching of coyotes here because of the high fur prices — up to \$50 a year they estimate. These two animals were mighty shy — took off running at over 1/4 mile.

We immediately started taking fish when we reached the river and the rise continued until about 2 PM, slowing down toward the end. Our

Sept 7, 1977 (cont) aggregate catch was 48 trout between us, with perhaps a third of them in the 13 to 17" size range. They took decent sized flies too - no apparent need to go down to size 18 or 20. Most were pure cutr, a few hybrid rainbow/cutr or apparent pure rainbows.

A fine buck antelope was prancing up and down the flats as we left, surprisingly shy. Two bison bulls were evident in the distance. A prairie falcon came down the valley right over us.

Had a steak cook-out at the picnic grounds east of Lamar Ranger Sta. Caught a few of our fish near there after supper.

Sept. 8.

Slough Creek

Spent a pleasant day on Slough Creek. A pair of trumpeter swans flew up and down the stream and I took photos. A flock of honkers came by too. On the highway we saw two big bull moose being harassed by tourists with their Instamatic cameras. Also a coyote mousing in a meadow.

We took 9 fish between us. My three were 14½, 15½, and 18½" - all cutr. The rise was pretty slow.

Sept 9, 1977

Lower Lamar : Slough Cr.

Went to the lower Lamar and fished up where Hermin and I had good luck a year ago. To my chagrin, however, the canyon is completely boxed in just above where we quit last time, and Woody and I had to retreat to the car for lunch.

Above Thence to Slough Creek but there wasn't much doing. I got a 15" cut and Woody took three, up to 17". Met a young couple Bob and Lea Hill from Minnesota and had them for drinks while our barbecue was heating up. They did a bit better than we did, up stream a half mile or so.

Took several telephoto shots of a big bull moose at Blacktail Ponds on the way out. Saw trumpeter swans again along the creek. Fine chorus of coyotes at dusk.

Sept 10

Buffalo Ford

Decided to go back to good old Buffalo Ford for a final go with the cut-throats but this was not the day. Woody got three and I took one (an 18 1/2" beauty) in the whole day. Rise was to a fly so small I couldn't even identify it.

Saw a bald eagle on the river and 5 bison bulls near Sulphur Caldera. A fine bull elk near Swan Lake gave me a few toots on his bugle and some photos.

Sept 11, 1977

Gibbon River

We spent all day along the lower Gibbon. Found excellent water in the head of the meadow near Gibbon mouth but the fish were absolutely inactive. Grilled steaks for dinner.

Sept 12

Railroad Ranch, Id.

Lys the Parks and drove to Island Park where we checked in to the Last Chance Hotel. Drove to the edge of Railroad Ranch a couple of miles down stream and fished down about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. Saw an osprey catch a nice trout (12" or more) and a kingfisher catch a lesser one (5") but we couldn't catch one. There was no rise and we saw only two good fish - one was chasing a minnow and the other sort of breeched beside an underwater rock.

Sept 13

Shorting Henry's Fork

Set off in a boat from Island Park with Bill McAfee - our guide for the day. Bill is a trained fisheries biologist who prefers to guide. He worked in California for a time with Alex Calhoun.

We floated into Railroad Ranch about 9:15 AM and took out in the dark at 5 PM at

Sept. 13, 1977 (cont.) bridge where highway 20 crosses. The day was clear, crisp and windy → lonely on the river. During the day there were three distinct periods of trout rise — 11:30, 3 PM, and 8 PM. All were associated with a tiny silver colored ephemeroptera about size 26 or 28. Try as we might with every fly in the box we couldn't take these fish. Woody and I each lost a fish or two by setting too hard (after casting for hours, a real rise scares you!). We took a few 5" yearlings, but not a single real rainbow. The never seen rainbow trout so goddam funny.

Saw two handsome bald eagles, lots of roughlegs, harriers, and ospreys, and hundreds of geese and ducks. The waterfowl show is great. At dusk a horned owl dropped down beside us and caught a mouse which it proceeded to eat in a pine tree, silhouetted against the sunset.

Sept. 14

Drove home from Island Park, 4:15 PM to 10:30 PM with only a few brief pit stops. Saw quite a few antelope and sagehens near Carey and a prairie falcon west of Winnemucca.

Lurlock

Sept. 25, 1977

Betty and I drove up last night to join Ed Channing and his family on a last-of-September dove hunt. Ed located a pretty good bunch of birds on Saturday in the slough country along San Joaquin River, but when we went there at daylight Sunday nothing showed up. No evidence of any shooting or disturbance. Ed was non-plussed.

We drove around and found some doves feeding in a big millet field that was plowed and being disced and leveled. Birds still found enough seed on the surface to gather a cropful. I killed three birds there and Betty got one. That was the day's shoot!

This area is one of the spots where Ed and some of his co-workers have put up a lot of wood duck boxes — 30 right here. They get high production (70%) if they visit the boxes weekly and throw out the starling nests. I understood the boxes are virtually all captured by starlings. We saw little groups of woodies all morning. Also a few high flocks of sprigs flew over.

Curiously, there are no deer here, though there seems to be plenty of bottomland timber and thickets. Saw and heard lots of quail.

10 doves

Brooke Island

Sept. 28, 1977

Sherm Chickering invited me to try a dove hunt on Brooke Island, where he is a member of a pheasant shooting preserve. We met at Richmond Yacht Harbor and the caretaker (Al) of the preserve took us across the $\frac{1}{4}$ mi. or so to the Island in a pouring rain - first one of the year and very welcome.

I was posted at a known dove pass on the west edge of the highland (a low flat area extended westward) and Sherm walked about on the roadways jump shooting and chasing the doves about, some of which came by me. We both had limits in an hour or so, despite the rain. There were certainly a hundred or more doves hanging around the island.

The vegetation is mostly coyote bush and other components of hard chaparral - relatively little open grassland. Pheasants were all over the place - most of them newly liberated although they number 100 or so Al tells me.

Lots of shorebirds, gulls, cormorants, and a few ducks flying around - a neat show.

5 sprigs
2 whole pheasants

Sorenson's

Oct 22, 1977

Opening week end with all the ceremony and trimmings. We had a mouse stew last night with too many drinks and too much wine.

Last choice and I went to no. 5 with my brand new Lab "Sake". I missed a couple of long shots and the pup began to act bored. I had to force him in that little barrel and he didn't like it. After Ted finished in #2 I moved over there and got into action quickly. When I knocked a high bird down and he went "splat" on the pond, I yelled "Sake - fetch!" and he was out there full speed returning straight back with the bird. By the time he had retrieved three, he was on tip toe, ready to go for anything. A coot lit nearby and away went the pup after him. I let him chase long enough to find he couldn't catch coots - then called him back. A diving cripple came next and Sake caught on right away and dived in to his shoulder to bring up the bird.

After lunch I took him after pheasants. Ward Russell and I walked along, the pup instantly following me at heel. When we got into some pheasants and I knocked down two, he retrieved both perfectly. He will learn to hunt soon enough.

3 sprigs

Sorenson

Oct 23, 1977

The flight was much lighter today - we all averaged 2 to 3 birds apiece instead of limits. I shot in #4 and Lake made nice retriever on two birds that fell near the blind. The third one fell dead 200 yards away and we picked it up later. A marsh hawk had chewed out the back but the breast was down in water, untouched. No loss.

Though the ducks were not working low over the ranch, a tremendous flight of sprigs came over very high, from daylight to 8:30, headed southwest toward the lower delta. I suspect they were migrants, just arriving. They flew in V's.

I didn't see a single jacksnipe all weekend but Woody saw a couple back of #4 on Saturday. Lots of dowitchers and a big flock of curlews on the pasture a mile north of us.

Counted kestrels coming over Friday morning (8) and returning Sunday afternoon (9). Two weeks ago Woody and I saw 4 and 3 on the drives to and from the ranch. You can generally see 3 or more white-tailed kites each way. A few rough-legs are in.

5 sprigs

Sorenson

Oct. 26, 1977

As second choice I went to #4 and was not sorry. Ted in #2 and I got all the shooting, as sometimes happens on a SW breeze. Blund 5 and 6 got essentially no action.

Between 7 AM and 8:15 birds showed real attraction to the #4 corner of the pond. I had good action and shot well - 5 birds with 8 shells, finishing off with a very long double. I called Hennis over from #5 as I cleared out, but not another bird came. He did not fire his gun.

The total flight today was about the lightest I ever have seen here. Very few high overhead flocks. More widgeon than on the week-end but still 50% sprig. Very few shovelers or teal. No geese at all. A few canvasbacks.

Best news - The snipe are starting to arrive. I saw flocks of 6 and 8, and a few singles circling around, and Hennis jumped three as he came out diagonally across the S end. We may have enough for a shoot soon.

There are some big groups of curlews gathered on pasture being irrigated. A few yellowlegs and dowitchers too.

Home early in the afternoon. No bird count since we used a different route.

with Ken Thorpe

6 Spruce

5 Orlean pheasants

Garrison

Oct 29, 1977

It rained Friday night but quit before daylight and weather started to clear. Blue skier and fluffy white clouds by 9 AM.

The morning duck flight was very light - fewer birds in the sky than I remember for a long time. Those few, however, worked our pond pretty well - especially singles and pairs. Ken and I had plenty of chances in #2 blind but shot poorly. Most chances were pretty long (45 yards plus) and our timing was off, total performance was pretty lousy. But we had a good time and enjoyed watching the new dog learn. He got lost once, wandered all the way across the pond proudly carrying a cork sprig and wondering where the blind had disappeared to. When finally he stopped splashing along, I whistled him back, to the vast amusement of everyone on the pond. He is promised a compass for Christmas!

After lunch we took a short pheasant hunt. Ken, Woody and I found a big bunch of wild pheasants along the main canal north of hot corner and east of the pump tide patch. We went out with fine birds in one short drive.

Big flock of curlews on Elbe Annex - perhaps 300 of them.

4 Valsae pheasants
11 cock sprigs

Sorenson

Nov 4-5, 1977

I had a committee meeting in Davis Friday AM, Nov. 4, so Gady McPeak and I went out to Sorenson after the meeting, had lunch, and went pheasant hunting. Ted joined us during the hunt. Found a fair number of birds (all wild) along ditches in the N end of Valsae and came out with 5 - one was Ted's. Little Sabe made some good retriever but still doesn't know how to look for birds in cover. He goes into action after you shoot one!

Rained hard in the night but was clearing at daylight. The big concentration of ducks on the ponds was scattered by the rain, but some came back throughout the morning. Gady and I had a dandy shoot in no. 2. Quit the blind at 9:30 with 11 lovely fat sprigs, so that Woody could move over from #5 and get some shooting. He did, and had his 5 by about 11:15. Dennis brought 5 sprigs out of #4. Ted who took #6 as first choice, had the slowest shooting.

Sabe did well on retrieving. Doubtless he doesn't seem to understand yet - after delivering one he gets back in his barrel. Also he watches birds lighting on the pond and is inclined to charge out after them, with the idea if we won't shoot them, he'll catch them for us!

Saw 15 hestula from the ranch to Breasville.

2 sprigs
6 jacksnipe

Soremnor

Nov 9, 1977

Went to no. 4 as last choice and had two shots. Pretty slow flight all around — we had 6 birds between the three of us. Dennis had to leave #2 early so I moved over there but didn't fire a shot in two hours. Would have had a couple more good shots in no. 4.

After duck hunting I went for jacksnipe but couldn't find any at all on our south end, though there had been quite a few down there at daylight as I went into no. 4. Looked a bit at Little Joe's pond without finding them. Where do they go at daylight?

After lunch I went alone to the north end of Round Farms property for a serious try at snipe. Found some birds there but not nearly as many as I remembered from last year. I did see groups of birds (up to 8) fly out of the marsh and settle in the rough clods of the field to the north, being disced by a tractor. Is this where the snipe disappear during the day. After a long hunt I was resting in the tailgate of the car, gun in my lap, when two snipe came from the field right over me. I got one of them, making 6 for the day.

2 spruce
5 snipe

Sorenson

Nov 13, 1977

Took my class out Saturday on the annual excursion to Gray Lodge Refuge. Very little water on the refuge and few birds - perhaps 30,000 at most. Came back to the duck club at 5 PM and had a delicious duck dinner with Ted and Woody.

Sunday morning was flat calm at daylight. A nice westerly breeze at 4:30 died away. There were lots of birds on the pond but after we flushed them practically none came back. I had one shot in no.4 just at shooting time with two other chances at singles. Ended up with a pair of spruce.

Again the substantial number of spruce we heard jumping on the way to the blinds was completely gone before daylight. I watched marsh hawks cruising the south end all morning and they did not jump a single spruce. Woody and I went over most of Joe's pond without raising one bird. What the hell is going on? Are they all taking to the plowed fields?

After lunch we worked hard in N end of Thomas Pond and got 13 snipe between us. Again we saw birds settling in the dry clods.

I followed Woody home. He counted 11 kestrels, I got 12. Good double check.

1 spig
2 snipe

Sorenson

Nov. 16, 1977

A promising W breeze at breakfast time petered out to dead calm at daylight. Then a slight NE breeze blew for an hour, followed by more calm. At 9:30 a nice NW breeze started but by then the flight was over.

In no. 2 I had three long shots in the first hour and missed them all. About 9 I had my final chance and missed the right barrel but connected on the left. Our chances for shooting were considerably diminished by the total absence of hunters on the main Gilmore pond - birds jammed in there by the thousands and sucked up wandering flocks. It kept the sky pretty well swept clean.

But the snipe are in! As we left the pond we jumped a whole gang of them in our south end and all the way along the road to the cars. I got two just walking along, but didn't have time to go back for a serious hunt - had to get back to Berkeley for a meeting of the CABS Trustees. We'll catch up with those rascals later.

Saw 9 kestrels on the way home.

3 spruce
8 snipe
1 cock pheasant

Sorenson

Nov 19, 1977

This is Ladies Week-end at the House of Commons. Betty came up with me Fri. evening, and this morning we went to no. 5 double (I was last choice). We spent a quiet morning, watching the action at other blinds. Several times big "boils" of spruce would start tumbling into our pond - sometimes many hundreds of birds coming in at once. One time nobody shot and a good many hundred came down before a shot was fired. They came out over no. 5, pretty high actually, but Betty and I got three of them. I doubled on cock and Betty nailed a nice fat hen. That was our only score. Betty shot a few times at teal, redgrouse and shorelarks without getting anything.

After lunch I went snipe hunting in north end of Mound Drain, there being virtually no birds in our south end (after the big concentration we had last Wednesday). Birds were scattered - I walked long and hard, and couldn't hit them when they did fly up, but I finally captured a limit. Also jumped a nice big pheasant cock that was added to the trophy basket.

We had a fine turkey banquet in the evening, joined by the Furmans and Woods. Allen and Harold had good spruce shoots this PM in blinds 2 and 6, with Woody and Dennis respectively.

Nov 2 spige
5 snipe
Heady 2 spige
1 widgon

Southern

Nov 20, 1977

I took Harold Heady to no. 2 today. The flight was exceedingly light - less even than I anticipated. But we had a few chances and by virtue of some damn good shooting we bagged a few birds.

No big "boils" came into the pond today. One only shot was at single and pair. Nor were there very many teal, shorelarks or widgon hanging around - they disappeared too. Ted got one spige in 6, Alan had a teal in 4, and Dennis and Sally were skunked in no. 5. With 5 ducks we were high blind.

We are starting to see more geese. Some big flocks of speckle bellies passed north and a little bunch of snows came over us just out of range. Also saw two flocks of canvasbacks and a few miscellaneous divers (pintails, bufflehead, a goldeneye).

On the way back to the car I quartered across the field of reed canary grass looking for snipe. Jumped about a dozen and shot at five, killing every one. Later I figured that today I shot 7 shells and came home with 2 spige and 5 snipe. After lousy shooting yesterday I don't know what black magic overcame me today.

Betty and I counted kestrels on the way to Breauville - 21 this time.

Sorenson

Nov. 23, 1977

R. Barrett

1 sprig, 1 widgeon

4 Oakes Pheasants

Clear calm weather after the terrific rain storm of last Monday. There were very few ducks on the ranch and the morning flight was the lightest I have ever seen. In #6 Ray got one widgeon; in #2 Ted and Bill Donovan were skunked; no. 4 Woody got one sprig. I didn't shoot.

The big shot today was in no. 5 where Dennis took his youngest boy Justin (age 10) for his first duck hunt. Justin got a widgeon and a teal with just four shots, and this made him high gun on our whole pond! Lots of jollity and congratulatory speeches and Ted paid him off a bit with a box of 20 ga. shells.

About half our barrels were full of water today from the 3 to 4 inches of rain that fell, plus high wind. At #6, the old barrel (5) and the dog barrel were full and had to be bailed. At #5 both barrels were full. Dennis succeeded in bailing the iron barrel and he and Justin were in it together, Dennis not shooting. No. 1 is full, of course.

After chili bean lunch supplied by Donovan we all went pheasant hunting on Oakes. Found about 20 birds in the hot corner and a dozen along the N-S double ditch. Killed 8 in all.

No snipe around the ponds anymore - all scattered.
16 kestrels on trip home.

Craig Wiley ranch, Greenfield

Nov. 25-27, 1977

Woody and I came down for our annual quail hunt. Arrived Friday late morning (day after Thanksgiving) and hunted close to the ranchhouse for a bit - then went up to the cabin in the hills and "Middlehauff Flat" in the afternoon. Found several small bunches but they are largely adult birds and very hard to catch up with.

On Saturday we again started around the ranch and this time located a very nice bunch of 50 birds or so, watering at Arroyo Seco creek at 8:30 AM. On the very flush we each got a bird and young. Mike did a masterful job of trailing a cripple through extremely dense sweet clover along the stream bank. We failed however, to get another decent shot. Half the birds went onto the extremely steep bank - almost a cliff - on the S side of the stream. They ran and flew along the upper face, too far to shoot.

At 9 AM we set out from the ranch with Craig and his two younger sons Richard and John (Budda). Went up Arroyo Seco several miles to another family ranch. There we jumped two coveys of 25 or so each and got a lot of

Wiley Ranch - quail hunt (cont.)

shooting. I got 4 birds including a good double, and Woody had 2. Most fun however came from Budda's bagging two flying quail on this his first ever quail hunt. He just completed the hunter safety course and bought his first license a few days ago.

Woody and I set up lunch on the banks of the stream under the shade of a big sycamore and Craig joined us. After lunch we settled down for a good nap but Woody opened one eye and saw a covey of 20+ birds fly by us against the face of the S cliff. So we couldn't sleep any more but ~~put~~ together a big campaign - Woody went by car to the top of the cliff, I moved in below. Great plan but we never saw the quail again.

Late afternoon we drove back to the hill cabin and cruised about looking for a late feeding covey but with no success. He did find a little gang of 15 mourning doves in a thicket of blue oak beside a turkey mullein patch. I got two of them (our late dove hunt is on now).

Sunday morning we again attacked the home covey with singular lack of success. Those birds refuse to scatter or sit still after being flushed. Woody did get two - I had nothing. But I

Wiley Ranch - quail hunt (cont.)

walked west along the road while Woody went back for the car, and I heard birds calling at the road fork bordering the field of bull grass. When Woody came up we rushed the covey - one above and one below - and scattered them along the steep sage bank to the south. Oddly enough, the birds stuck after one flush, and we moved systematically through them with devastating success. All of these birds had full crops, mostly legumes (lotus?), and perhaps this helped make them amenable to crawling into the very sparse sage cover, badly overgrazed by cattle. In any event we moved along jumping birds singly or in small groups, and after some damn good shooting I suggested we had better count our birds. The limit down here I think is 6 (elsewhere to the north it is 10). We had 13 birds between us so we unloaded our guns and quit, though there were many more scattered ahead of us. This little shoot was the best I have had in three years.

We saw a prairie falcon along the road as we left the Wiley ranch.

Adult		Imm.		<u>Our bag</u>
♂	♀	♂	♀	
6	12	4	3	= 25 for 3 days

This cover to 35 imm: 100 adults

1 spig
4 valise pheasants

Sorenson

Nov 20, 1977

Moon was clear (no fog) and a good stiff N breeze started blowing at about 7:30. A heavy continuous flight of spige passed northward well to the east of us (along the ship canal) but nary a damn thing came our way. Four of us had five ducks when we quit at 10:30 (3 spig, 2 mallards). Later I heard that Rene Marty and guest killed limits of spige on Mound Farm #80 pond, which would have been along the edge of the big flights.

There were more shorebirds and tidal today than formerly and a scattering of widgeon, 2 canvasbacks, no geese or swans.

I scaled a cock spig off to the south and took young Sake out into the Sudan grass along my marked line. He picked the bird out of a dense cluster of cover as neat as you please. A prairie falcon flew by us as we were after this duck.

After lunch we had a tour of the pheasant circuit - 15 or 20 birds here in hot corner, another 10 or so along the N-S double ditch. We took 8 between us. Jerry Russell hunted with his dbl. barrel muzzle loader. Had some shots but didn't score.

Woody and I saw 21 kestrels on way out. Alone either one of us would have had about 18 or 19.

1 spring
1 widgeon
1 Valise pheasant

Sorenson

Dec 3, 1977

FOG! We went to bed last night with the valley sparkling clear and a spanking south wind. Off and on during the night I speculated about which blind to choose (I was second choice), assuming Ted would exercise his choice to #2. What a crushing blow to wake up at 4:30 and find the world socked in and the wind gone.

We went through all the motions just as though we were going to shoot ducks. Ted took #6, I went to #2, Dennis to #4, and Woody to #5. We ended up with seven birds between us, most of them killed between 11 and noon when the fog started to lift - it never did break. We left the blinds at noon and came back to the club house for some stiff drinks and a bit of lunch.

After lunch we went out to vent our frustration on the poor pheasants. Made the usual hunt (hot corner, double ditch, north ditch) and killed 8 birds, all wild. I don't know where the liberated birds disappear to.

Sike did well on retrieving but still doesn't know how to hunt pheasants. Forgot to mention last Wednesday that a bunch of about 40 Ross geese flew dippy-doodling over the Elbe ponds like a bunch of sandpipers on a counting party of sprigs.

1 pintail x gadwall hybrid
1 G-w teal
8 snipe

Sorenson

Dec 10, 1977

MORE FOG. This one is about the worst any of us can remember. It lay hard on the ground all day and was still there when we left late in the afternoon.

In #4 blind I had a shot at a bunch of a dozen or so big ducks looming out of the fog, one of which I could see had a long pointed tail. I got him down with two shots and it turned out to be a very strange looking bird — mostly pintail but with markings on the back and head of a gadwall. It is a male, bill and feet blue like a sprig, long sprig tail, head brown on top, buffy cheeks and throat, partial white line up sides of neck (like sprig) and vermiculated back like gadwall. I've never seen one before. Will put it up for MV2. Later killed a pretty little male teal.

Hunted geese for a while for Silver Fox Cox and sent him home with seven — that ought to keep Margaret happy. After that we did some snipe hunting on N end of Mound Prairie. Plenty of birds but we could scarcely see them in the fog. I ended up with a limit, part of which I got at S end of our pond before lunch.

I was invited to House of Lords for lunch. Stew Chickering served a delicious venison stew, made from the buck Dave Packard and I helped him get out of a canyon. Too foggy for kestrel count.

Sorenson

Dec 14, 1977

Box 1 g-w. teal
6 snipe
Luna 1 valise pheasant
1 snipe

FOG all morning. Luna and I sat in the 6 blind and didn't get a reasonable shot at a big duck. I took on a little flight of teal and killed one pretty little hen. — That was our duck shoot!

After a few drinks and some lunch Luna, Woody and I set out after the snipe. We worked over 5 end, Little Joe's, the Mound Farm Annex, and the 5 end of the valise landing pasture. The light was poor and the fog was heavy so we missed a lot of birds and didn't even shoot at others. But we ended up with 15 birds — 8 wms, 6 ss, 1 ss. There are plenty of snipe in the area. The problem is to get good clean shots.

Decided to give the pheasants a whirl so we surrounded Hot Corner and found many a bird! As we were getting into the car I saw a couple of pheasants fly into the weedy ditch just N of Hot Corner, so we bracketed that and Luna got a hen bird with a nice long shot. Well that we called it a day.

Curious lack of geese in our area — they don't even come over high. Where are they? I think I've seen more swans than geese.

No reasonable bird count in the fog.

Sorenson

Dec 17, 1977

Woody and I drove out at daylight to the pond but we didn't get out of the car. There was a driving, drenching rain and a 30 mph South wind. So we watched. Absolutely no flight over our pond, and little shooting elsewhere. But we could see clouds of ducks (largely sprig) landing in the harvested corn field between our pond and the main Belmont. From time to time they would flush but settle again in some other part of the field. They obviously wanted nothing to do with ponds. We drove down and flushed them once but they wouldn't leave. So we decided this was no day for duck hunting and we quit and went home at 5 PM.

As we left the ranch we found another big mob of sprigs in a winter barley field just S of Delhi Road. There were country partridge and the whole works.

I remember other times, at the old Cottail Club and elsewhere, when ducks shunned ponds in a wild storm but flew low over pastures and fields. On such a day the place to hunt is in a ditch in open country.

Again, kestrels were not much in evidence (count - 5).

2 sprig
1 widgeon
1 g-w teal

Sorenson

Dec. 24, 1977

Thick fog again at daylight. I went to no. 4 where Ted had a helluva shoot on Wednesday. He was getting spin-off from a mob of ducks sitting in the corn stubble SW of our pond. But today they weren't there (or if they had been Woody drove them off shooting from the levee at the far corner of the pond on his way to no. 2.). In any event, it was a long slow morning. I shot at one cock sprig flying with three widgeon and got both the sprig and one of his companions. With two other shots I got another high sprig and a teal — 3 shells, 4 ducks!

We still aren't seeing many geese, nor even hearing them pass overhead. Yet Fish & Game claims a substantial increase in geese in the State, as compared to last year. They must be hanging out farther up the Valley.

The heavy continuing rains have changed a lot of things. Ducks seem to congregate in fields in preference to water areas. Snipe are completely scattered, or perhaps they have actually migrated farther south. In any event we can't find them.

I counted 19 hestrals driving out after lunch.

1 sprig
3 s-w teal

Sorenson

Dec 28, 1977

Drizzling rain with low clouds (200 yds. or less) and light NE wind. Ted and I went to #6 and I respectively and got nothing. In no. 4 Woody got the spin-off from a great mob of ducks in the corn SW of our pond and he had a helluva shoot. Had his limit of 7 sprigs and mallards by 8 AM and sat in that blind for another hour before he vacated and let me in. I had moved to #5 in the meantime and had two teal. When I got into #4 at about 9:30 the flight was over. I picked off one cock sprig, very high, and added another teal. Ted came out of #6 with a widgeon and a teal. Back at the clubhouse we found that no-one else had had much of a shoot.

Yesterday afternoon Woody, Ted, and I set out at about 2:45 to find some snipe but we failed to do so. They are gone from our property - no doubt about it. We then hunted a bit for pheasants along the south end of Babae and jumped only one very fast wild hen that out-manuevered Woody. Heard honkers in some field NW of us but never could see them.

Kestrel count - 22 coming in, 25 going out.

2 sprigs
1 greenhead
35-w teal
1 widger

Sorenson

Dec. 31, 1977

Although there was fog locally last night, the morning broke clear with a light north breeze. First time we have seen the sun in a week's age. Likewise it was the first time in weeks that sprigs have actually worked our stick-up decoys. But this they did, and we had good shooting in #4, fair in #6, a hit in #5 and nothing made in no. 2. I'd limited in #4 by 8:30 and I moved over. Left at 9:45 with a total of 6 ducks and moved back to #5 so Rennie could come over from #2. Ultimately he got 4 good shots at sprigs and bagged 2, along with several widgers taken in #2. This was the most dazzling show of waterfowl we have seen all season - great skeins (or sometimes clouds) of ducks, flocks of hundreds of sandhill cranes, honkers, snow geese and speckle-cullies. It was worth the price of admission just to see the birds.

After lunch we went for pheasants, and between five of us bagged 8 birds, in the hot corner and north along the double ditch. In warm sunshine the birds held beautifully. Ted's dog "Jake" held several points as solid as could be.

Between us we saw not one single jacksnipe - they have left obviously.

I had tire trouble so we went out via Midway - relatively poor kestrel habitat (Count - 13).

Hewlett Packard ranch

10 mi. W of Merced

Jan. 6 - 8, 1978

Met Bill Hewlett, Sheron Chichering and John Young at San Jose airport and flew to Merced in one of the company Sabrejets. A car was waiting at the field and we reached the ranch in time to have an hour's pheasant hunt before dusk. Pheasant cover is minimal on most of the 6000 acre ranch - the bulk of it is improved cattle pasture. Some small patches of cattail and planted milo near the clubhouse constitute most of the pheasant habitat. Birds use up and down the creek that passes the house. We killed a few pheasants but mainly enjoyed the walk and watching the great flights of sandhill cranes headed for some roosting area to the west. About dusk Otto Miller drove in and later Dave Packard. Drinks served in front of a cheerful fire in the living room.

Jan. 7

Coffee and sweet rolls before going to the duck blinds. I went with Bill to the "Hewlett pond", Dave took the others to "Packard pond" adjoining. Heavy fog at daylight began to break up at 8:30 and then an even denser fog rolled in at 9 am and persisted all day. Duck hunting was

Herdlett-Pachard, Merced

Jan 7, 1978 (cont.) shingry as would be expected. I got a Ross goose at daylight (thought it was a snow goose in the fog) and later a green wing teal. Others had only a bird or so apiece. Could hear sprigs and lots of geese (snow mostly) above the fog but only teal and widgeon came down.

At 5 PM we quit the blinds and went pheasant hunting. Found some recently liberated birds that could hardly fly and a few wild birds. Killed six or so before repairing to the house for a big brunch of bacon and scrambled eggs. We cleaned all the game while Dave prepared lunch. Plucked pheasants for 2 to 3 minutes in water at 160°F (Otto's formula) and it certainly loosened the feathers.

After lunch we all got into a 4-wheel drive Travelall and went to the H-P "Cunningham Ranch" of 18,000 acres in the low foothills East of Merced. We hunted up and down Marysma Creek for mallards but found very few. Jumped a covey of quail and chased them around a bit - Sherm killed one! Also bagged a teal on the stream. Mostly though we drove around enjoying the view and the lovely soft green hills, covered with felaree shrubs and some grass.

Returned to the lowland ranch for a brief pheasant hunt before dark and a big steak dinner.

Hewlett. Packard, Merced

Jan. 8, 1978

This morning we all went to the Packard pond which has a lot of cattail cover. A great mob of snow geese and some ducks were gathered in an open field East of us, so Dave drove over there and chased them up - made for a good show but not much shooting. Still we all had chances, mostly at teal, and finished the morning with 7 g-w teal, 1 cin. teal, 1 wedgem and 1 hen sprig. Somehow it was a very pleasant morning, despite the lack of shooting. Just watching the cranes, long shins of geese, big groups of curlews and dowitchers, etc. made it interesting.

Again we cleaned all our game while Dave got lunch. Skinned the loot later and every bird went home ready for the stove or the freezer.

On the 10 mile drive from the ranch to Merced I counted 16 kestrels - I would judge about the same density as in the Sonoran-Bacoville area. Lots of buteo hawk, nearly all red-tails with only an occasional rough-leg. Saw only one kite. A handsome prairie falcon came right over us while we were pheasant hunting yesterday.

2 spruce
35-w teal
1 gadwall

Sorunson

Jan 10, 1978

Broken clouds, good south breeze, and no fog, yet we had scarcely a notable flight. In no 4 blind I had all the shooting, consisting of shots at a single and a pair of spruce, a little bunch of gadwall, and several teal. I shot well and came in with six mixed ducks. Dennis started in #5, moved to #2, and quit at 10 AM without a duck, after taking two desperation shots at spoonies. Yet there were plenty of birds in the country — lots of spruce and lots of geese going up and down the valley high. Only some honkers were rising in the corn to the south of us. Everyone else seemed to want to go elsewhere.

At #4 I had an unending parade of spoonies zooming back and forth and lighting in the ditches. The handsome drakes are in full plumage now, I see signs of courtship too — bowing and chasing on the water. From time to time a courting party of spruce or widgeon would go by, originating on the main Gilmore pond where no one shot today and a mob of birds was concentrated.

After lunch Dennis took Morrie Cox and a guest pheasant hunting but I demurred — Too damn much mud and heavy walking for me. Drove home via Midway Road and Stover's packing house where I ordered some meat.

Sorenson's

Jan 18, 1978

FLOODED OUT! Day before yesterday a flood came down the by-pass so suddenly that Duncan had no time to warn us. With his Mexican boys he rounded up a few of our decoys at \$5 and \$6, but most of them are either gone with the flood waters or are jammed in the mud (one stick-up) and hopefully will emerge when the water recedes.

Betty and I came up today to get some meat from Stamen's and to view the scene at Sorenson's.

Saw 13 hertels coming in via Elmeria - most of them on the first half of the route. The storm drove them from the mid-valley toward the foothills. Going back out via Medway we saw 9.

Jan 21, 1978

Sorted the decoys for home salvage and painting. Closed up the kitchen for the season. Had a sumptuous lunch at Leth Joe's.

Counted 18 hertels on way in, 15 coming out.

By-pass still full of water, though it had dropped a couple of feet from Jan. 18.

Croydon Lodge, Gore, New Zealand
Feb 2, 1978

Woody, Ted Kersseff and I arrived here yesterday after spending a night in Auckland. A Toyota 4-wheel drive cruiser was waiting for us in Invercargill Airport, c/o M & M Motors. We reached our quarters mid afternoon, had drinks and dinner with Dean and Kay Furman who were en transit to Australia.

This morning Peter Cullen called for us about 9 AM in his fancy Land Rover and took us to his brother's place about midway between Mataura and Wyndham, on the west bank of the Mataura River. Fish were rising smartly when we arrived but slowed perceptibly by 10 AM. I hooked a fine big brown on a size 18 Adams but the hook broke after 10 to 15 minutes of playing him. Woody landed one about 22" - Peter guessed 4 1/2 lbs. After lunch Peter took Ted upstream and he landed a 20 inches. I stayed near camp and coaxed an 18" with a nymph. Pulled him out from under the willow and played him across the whole river to the other side for netting. So we had one fish apiece.

From 5 to 7:00 we waited around hoping for an early evening rise but there was very little. Woody hooked a big one in shallow water but the hook pulled loose after a minute or so.

Lots of mallards along the river, and stilts stayed with us all day. Also several spur-winged plovers.

Joan Church farm, 14 mi. N of Gore

Feb 3, 1978

The river is much smaller of here - easily waded with his boots at ripples. Peter started out with me and at the first ripple he pointed out a fish in fast water about a foot deep. After several casts I got a fly over him and nailed him - an 18" dandy. At Peter's suggestion I went a few feet farther up and was casting over shallow rippled water at the extreme edge of the main flow - perhaps 4" deep - when another 18 inches emerged and took the fly and after a proper fight he was landed too. Just on a #16 yellowbelly humpie, stood on a #16 "dark red drake" (a favorite pattern of Peter's). At this point I sent Peter off with Ted to show him about and got him a fish.

We gathered at 1 PM for a fabulous lunch of Cullen Goodies, Topped off with a trout cooked on a little tin grill flavored with wood alcohol. It was superb. Started to rain about when lunch ended but we all went back on the stream anyway. Strong NW wind too which made casting a bit tough. Ted took another 18" fish and Woody (guided by Peter) came in with a 15 1/2 inches. All told then we had 5 fish for the day, all between 18 and 15 1/2 inches. Saw a few bigger ones, but mostly Peter says the fish here are smaller.

Lots of mallards here also, and a few clearly recognizable gray ducks. Silver gulls abundant - came right into camp for scraps.

A. J. Martin place, 5 km. downstream from Gore

Feb 4, 1978

Rained all last night and drizzled intermittently during the day. This "new" stretch of the river turned out to be the place where Betty and I picked a couple of years ago on some shelf rock and Betty saw a weasel. However, we were on the other side of the river today. During the morning there were a few desultory rises but no persistent feeding. Neither Woody nor I had a rise, but Ted under Peter's shore guidance fished hard until 1 PM and had several rises, landing one fish of about 20 inches. He had him barbecued for lunch — delicious. After a leisurely lunch we decided to abandon the river and go exploring. Peter took us about 18 miles to the Kaiwera — a small stream but pretty rich in trout Peter says. Woody landed a 14 inch and saw several more good fish including a couple of monsters. Ted hooked one and played it down but lost it in landing when the hook broke. I didn't raise a fish but jumped a good one from a shallow run. Woody broke his rod tip in a fall and Ted ripped hell out of his waders. Fishing these small streams can be tough!

Along the road we saw a number of dead hedgehogs and one weasel popped across in front of us. Woody came across a possum in the grass.

Archie McDonald farm, between Mataura and Heywoodham
Feb 5, 1978

Our last day with Peter and he took us to a new site on the river, a mile or so above his brother's place. As we arrived a brisk East wind began, which gathered enthusiasm all day — and depleted our enthusiasm correspondingly. There was no rise at all so we fished nymphs cross current and down, like ordinary net flies. I had one good strong strike which broke the tippet. Aside from that, nobody had a bit of action nor even saw any fish feeding all day. We ended up at the A. J. Martin place where we were yesterday and sat in the car watching the wind whip the water. Went home at 7 PM to catch dinner, without a one of us having caught a fish. Rather a poor way to end our stint with Peter Cullem.

We are constantly amazed at the number of sheep carried in these rich and well managed paddocks — up to 7 or 8 per acre. They use a lot of lime and superphosphate, and rotate the animals from one paddock to another, grazing the grass & closer down to the ground and then giving it three to four weeks to recover. The Martin place is mainly Holstein dairy cattle but the pasture rotation is about the same. He uses a lot of electric fence to keep his cattle where he wants them. Has a slick rotating milking platform that holds 16 cows, each one hooked up to the milking machine. When a cow has made the circle on the carousel she is empty and another takes her place.

Sims/Cullen farm, between Mataura and Wyndham

Feb 6, 1978

We returned to the same pleasant spot where Peter took us the first day, Feb. 2. It was a holiday, however, and there were picnickers and fishermen on both sides of the river ("New Zealand Day" whatever that means).

I started downstream and came to an opening in the willows about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile down where I spotted a nice fish feeding in the shallow gravel near shore. A few casts with a #18 Adams and I had him fast. He fought doggedly and persistently for about 20 minutes before I could net him. Woody had arrived in the meantime and took pictures. He was $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches and weighed $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. on Woody's little scale. I kept him for tomorrow breakfast.

Andy Russell the fish warden came by as I was casting to another feeding fish in deep water. We visited a while, and Andy spotted the wandering fish for me while I tried to cast ahead of him. He seemed to take the fly once but I felt nothing. I saw a few other feeding fish but had no more strikes. Nor did Ted or Woody have any luck. The day was clear, bright sunshine, light breeze — everything looked great, except there was no good hatch and hence not much of a rise.

After dinner we went to the gravel pit beach right in the outskirts of Gore. Still no hatch till 9:30 as it was getting dark. Woody saw some rising fish and had several casual strikes but no hook-ups.

Joan Church farm, 14 mi N of Gore

Oct 7, 1978

We went back to the area where we got 5 fish last time, but it didn't work out that way at all. The weather was pretty, the gulls were friendly, the Angus Steers were cuddly, but the trout were coy. We saw plenty of fish in flat water and a few of them did a bit of feeding. But in the ripple areas there was no trace of action. The result was that we didn't catch one golden trout between the three of us. We camped under the same willow tree as last time and had a lovely lunch with a good cool bottle of Montana Blendheimer wine. But after lunch we drove home and spent the late afternoon in luxurious showers, gear tinkering, note writing and napping. As we left the stream we came across two tiny, newly-hatched chicks of the spurs-winged plover. The parents were raising hell overhead as we caught the two birds and took pictures.

After dinner we geared up for a return try at the gravel pit area. I explored about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of stream front near the gravel area and didn't locate any good fishing spot other than the flat pool where Woody had struck yesterday. We fished until dark without anyone getting a strike.

Went home to our quarters and poured a few good stiff drinks.

Kirby's Bar, Wyndham (7)

Jul 8, 1978

We drove to Wyndham and had a visit with Henry Heath. He had a doctor's appointment but sent us on to Kirby's with the assurance that he would join us later. I was amazed at the changes that the Nov. 1977 flood had rendered - Kirby's Bar is essentially gone and the suspension bridge to the island has disappeared. We waded across to the head of the island and fished down the newly cut channel to the old suspension bridge. Ted and I both located feeding fish along the cut bank and Ted hooked and landed his. Later Woody showed up and he hooked one below where Ted caught his, so we had two fish in hand at lunch time.

Henry Heath and Jim Joly joined us for lunch and we enjoyed some stream-cooled cans of beer and a bottle of wine while we lolled around in the grass telling lies. After lunch Henry and I went downstream to a big pool where we spent the afternoon casting to a rising fish (4 to 5 lbs. Henry said) who ignored us. We returned to camp and all repaired to Henry's house for beer, Skotch, tea and biscuits.

Then we went to a new hole above Wyndham and cast away the evening until nearly 10 PM. Jim Joly caught two fish. None of the rest of us did a damn thing.

Senecio pasture, across from Sims/Cullen ③

Feb 9, 1978

Took the back road (E side of river) from Metairie to Weydham and turned in at the big pasture of yellow Senecio in full bloom. This brought us to streamside directly opposite the Sims/Cullen place where Peter took us the first day. Started to rain about when we arrived and rained hard for several hours. We saw no rising fish and finally came back to the car for a damp lunch. I talked to a young man from Invercraigill who had caught one fish on a nymph, fished deep under overhanging willows.

Went home for a period of rest before dinner, then cruised down the East side of the river about 3 miles from E Gore to the property of a Mr. Chalmers who lives at the junction of Kairera road. He gave us permission to drive across his paddocks to the river, more or less across from the Gore racetrack. At the foot of a long, flat hole I ran into a heavy rise starting 5 PM and hooked a nice fish in a few minutes. By the time I landed him it was pretty dark (9:30 PM) and I had trouble tying on a fresh fly. Finally got going but rise was largely over. I had ~~one~~ more solid rise but missed the hook-up.

Woody got a fish at the head of the pool on a nymph. I didn't go up but just watched.

I cleaned my trout in the dark and left my knife on the riverbank.

Cattle Flat, 12 mi. N of Riversdale on main Mataura

Feb 10, 1978

Following directions of Bill Miller we drove without a hitch to the Harry Rae property where the Mataura emerges from the Garvie Mountains. Old Uncle Alec directed us to the stream across from the homestead. It was a lovely sunny day with good visibility in the water. We saw fish all day long but didn't find many of them feeding - just lying about in the pools. Ted caught a 3 pounder. After lunch we had a slight rain squall. Just fishing at 3 PM and came home. Stopped in Riversdale at the pub in the better country hotel and found the place jammed with happy, noisy beer drinkers. Turned out it was "ram sales day" in Riversdale and the coaches for miles around were assembled. The place sounded like a parrot roost. We were quickly involved in conversations and ended up buying tickets for the football lottery (at 50¢ each).

A flock of about 8 Paradise ducks came up and down the river several times. Uncle Alec tells us they were hatched and reared on the place.

In the evening after dinner I went alone back to Chalmers to retrieve my knife. It was too windy to fish - didn't see a rise. But I sat on the riverbank and watched the mallards side-slipping in the wind. A pair of teal came by - what species I do not know. Shape and flight pattern of our cinnamon teal.

Kirby's Island, Wyndham

Feb 11, 1978

Bright sunny morning but with a persistent north wind. We fished around the Island where we had found rising fish on the morning of Feb. 8 but there was no action at all. So about noon we piled into the car in our waders and drove to Myers property at the junction of the Wyndham (Mokoreta) River and the Mataura. There were a few rises on the Wyndham and Woody caught a couple of "wee tiddlers" but failed to raise a decent fish. On the long cut bank of the Mataura Ted and I had a bit more action. Ted hooked a nice fish from the top of the bank but couldn't get down the 10 foot drop-off to land it. He tried to hoist it onto the beach finally but lost it of course. I saw the situation and planned to come with a net but was very busy at the moment with a big fish lying in a pocket of the cut bank. Never could raise him, on a dry fly or nymph. So we didn't get either fish properly to the net, though Ted's was essentially captured. Ted had two other strikes on nymphs.

Another bunch of Paradise ducks zoomed around us for a while — a dozen or so. Also there was an oyster-catcher on the bar near where I was fishing. Forgot to say yesterday that I picked up a car-killed owl ("morepork") on the road north of Riverdale.

Cattle Flat, 12 mi. N Riversdale; Harry Rae property ①

Feb 12, 1978

We decided that perhaps we were getting on the stream too late so today we got up at 6:00, were on the road at 6:30 and were at streamside on Cattle Flat a bit after 7:30. It was foggy at first but the sun soon cut it. The water was gin clear, the sunlight good, no wind, but not a trace of a hatch or a rise. Ted caught a 3 pounder in a ripple at 8 am. I saw a good fish rise once beside a cut bank and eventually cajoled him into a good rise but I failed to get a hook-up, though I nicked him hard. Later I had a hook-up with a smaller fish but the hook pulled out after a minute. Those two rises were my total for the day. Woody caught a small fish (11 to 12") on a nymph.

A flock of Paradise ducks circled about and came by me close enough for a photograph. I snapped them at 1/500th second and will hope for the best. Saw tracks of a possum and a rabbit in a sand dune beside the stream.

After missing both breakfast and lunch we drove home in the afternoon, had a big nap, several drinks, and then a stupendous Sunday night dinner.

Went down to the gravel pit in the evening ⑧. A brisk wind abated just at dark and fish began nymphing but I couldn't get one up on a dry fly.

Upper Mimbhan, Koubai Grove picnic area (11)

Feb. 13, 1978

Don Besselin took me in tow today and drove up the Mimbhan to headwaters in the National Forest preserve. He says there have been some nice fish taken there while the Maturna is largely dead. We started fishing the narrow, brushy creek just above the Koubai picnic grounds. Very shortly Woody tied into a 4 pounder and landed it despite some brush problems. Not long after he rose and hooked another of equal size but it pulled off. Ted saw some big ones and apparently missed a couple of good strikes. I didn't raise a fish. It amazes me that such a tiny stream (about the size of Sozehen Creek) can hold such big trout. One reason may be the population of crayfish. One was in the tummy of Woody's fish.

It rained hard for an hour in mid day and lots of birds came out of the native bush - touitits, yellowhammer, bell bird, native pigeons to name a few. There are a few mallards down this high in the hills, and shags come up, presumably to enjoy a trout breakfast. Don tells me that there are a fair number of red deer up here and they are increasing. The price of red deer is up to \$150 ± for a head. Even the common Australian possum is bringing \$7 to \$15 for a pelt. The deer market for venison is still hot Germany. There is a growing industry of deer farms, selling breeding stock largely (like chinchillas)

Lower Mimiham, back of Jack Ayers

Feb 14, 1978

We arrived at Jack's about 9 AM after getting slightly lost. Bobel served us tea and it was 10 AM before we set out for the stream a mile or so N of Jack's place, roughly 5 mi. ENE of Wyndham. The water here is murky from the Waiarikihi branch — the south fork we fished yesterday was gin clear. There was no rise all day, though the weather was clear, there was a light breeze S to W, and the "glass was rising" reputedly. All signs were gone. I saw a fair flight of ephemeroidea in late morning, but there was no visible response from the fish. Ted and I between us caught 4 — all in the 14 to 16" class. Jack borrowed Woodie's rod briefly and hooked but lost a better fish — maybe 2 pounds. But nothing really happened, so we quit at 3:30 and after a brief visit went Bobel down to Gore for a bit of shopping.

Jack tells us there are more trout in the Mimiham, and bigger ones, than we encountered two years ago. They just weren't on the prowl today.

Saw several Paradise ducks during the day. One female swam away under the willows and never reappeared. A little group of four came down river 25 yards high, right over all of us. Mallards kept popping out from the willows and there were open-winged plovers in the pastures. No stilts, however.

Did not try to fish in evening. Packed for moving tomorrow.

Went to Le Aman

Feb 15, 1978

Checked out of Croxson Lodge and set out for Le Aman about 9:00 AM. Picked up lunch goodies and ate along the way. Spent some time at Mossburn looking for the Taylor Bros. who run a deer farm. Then ran down Ray Brady who runs the local venison packing plant. He was busy watching on TV the important cricket match between New Zealand and England (NZ won!) so we agreed to stop by later on the return trip. Checked in at Le Aman Hotel mid-afternoon. Murray Knowler, our guide for the next three days, came by for drinks.

Feb 16, 1978

Fished the Eglinton River - first at The Bluffs⁽¹³⁾ and after lunch at Knobs Flat⁽¹⁴⁾. Woody caught a 4 lb. brown at the first stop and I took a 3 pounder at The Knobs area. I also hooked and lost a big brownie, probably 5 lbs. or more. Ted had several strikes and one hook-up but didn't land one. Beautiful wide, grassy valley in the midst of high alps on either side (up to 5000 ft.). Clear sunny day was perfect for fishing. Paradise ducks were scattered up and down the valley, and a bunch of about 40 honker Canada geese left the Knobs area when we arrived. Saw grouse birds (two) and bell birds at our lunch area at the bridge over East Branch of the Eglinton. There are said to be fair numbers of surviving red deer hereabouts.

Mouth of Mararua River, junction Waiau (15)

Feb 17, 1978

Murray took me to the mouth of the Mararua and we hit the jackpot. He walked Ted and Woody to the jetty where the river empties and each of them took a brownie cruising in the still water. I fished near the Land Rover upstream and landed a nice lively female brown, 21", 3 1/2 lbs., very deep and fat. She jumped several times and gave a good account of herself.

We assembled for lunch at a picnic spot (table, fire, etc) below the bridge and had hot tea along with the very ample supply of goodies packed by the hotel. After lunch Woodie fished upstream, Ted and I worked a riffle below the lunch spot. Ted ran into a pocket of rainbows and landed three, lost one that just plain outman him (a two pounder). He then called me over and I caught one. One of Ted's was two pounds, the others were all one to 1 1/2 pounds, but very lively. These small rainbows gave more fight than the biggest brown, with lots of jumping and long runs downstream. So we ended the day with 9 fish - our best record to date.

Stopped at the heliport between Manapouri and Te Anau where the deer are landed. There were 7 or 8 helicopters being serviced, a nice stainless steel refrigerated receiving station, but no deer in it - all sent on to Mossburn for processing.

N. end of North Mavora Lake

Feb 18, 1978

There was heavy traffic today up the Melford Sound road to greet the arrival of Queen Mary II ocean liner on a world cruise. So we went the other way, to the Mavora lakes. Murray towed his jet boat on a trailer and we roared up the lake, arriving at the upper end about 11 AM. We all walked beaches looking for the big monster browns that are supposed to frequent this area. We saw a few of them but nobody got a rise.

Pulled back down the lake about half way and beached in a sheltered cove, out of the heavy wind for a lunch stop. Charged by a bunch of about 150 Paradise ducks, most of them flightless in mid-molt (males and females alike). There were flying birds too. Also clusters of big droppings at the N end of the lake which must have been Canada geese, but we didn't see any. Saw several cruising trout at our lunch beach but they were not interested in flies. One came right up to my Royal Wulff and scooped at it. Several of the fish we saw were very big - 5 lbs and up.

Mid-afternoon we re-loaded the boat and headed toward home. Stopped for an hour's fishing at the mouth of the Mavora. We raised a few rainbows and I hooked one about 1 1/2 lbs. and played him for 5 minutes (some spectacular jumping) before he broke the hook. Ted and I and Murray all caught little ones (wee tiddlers).

Eglinton River, Knobs Flat

Feb 15, 1978

Low heavy clouds, spitting rain, and heavy west wind. Despite all these unfavourable portents we went up the Eglinton valley to where we caught a fish or two and lost some others Feb. 16. We fished all morning without much action. Ted raised a big one from under a cut bank and had him on temporarily but the hook didn't hold. Neither Woody nor I had a rise, nor did we see a fish out in feeding water.

Woody saw a haka pass along the face of the steep mountain west of us. It was squawking like a parrot should and with binoculars he could see the red underparts and green back. We also were kept entertained all morning by passing groups of Paradise ducks and Canada geese. The Paradise duck is actually one of the most abundant birds in these mountain valleys. Along the road you can see bunches of 10 to 20 standing about in paddocks, with the sheep. Most of them seem to be flying well now.

We saw a helicopter parked on the lakeside meeting a venison refrigerated truck. Did not stop to see what was going on - we should have.

Tonight we are doing laundry and repacking gear for the move to Blade House tomorrow.

Le Aman & Glade House, Clinton River

Feb 20, 1978

Caught the bus at 8:15 which got us on the ferry boat at 9 AM about half way up the lake. Reached Glade House before noon and had lunch with Phil and Betty Turnbull, Keith and Betty — (assisting couple) and little Curry who helps out.

After lunch Ted and I independently explored up-river a mile or so. Ted found a big brownie feeding in a riffle and took him on a dry fly — $4\frac{3}{4}$ pounds. As he came downstream he found me working on a rising fish and he spotted for me until I finally hooked him on a nymph. He took one dry fly which scratched his chin and wouldn't repeat, hence I went to the nymph.

A beat-up old male rainbow, $24\frac{1}{8}$ inches, $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

We put both of these back and went down to dinner quite happy. Woody had fished the lower river below Glade House and had nothing.

After dinner we walked along the river in front of the lodge and watched a really substantial evening rise. But on the supposition that we would catch them all tomorrow we just looked. A visiting engineer went out and caught a 4 lb. rainbow on a nymph.

Kear were flopping all over the yard and buildings seeking a handout. Pigeons are abundant in the forest on slopes above the Glade. We heard a more-pork calling in the night and at daylight.

Grade House, Clinton River

Feb 21, 1978

Heavy overcast at breakfast but we went hopefully up to North Branch of the Clinton with a light in the jeep from Keith. Started to rain as we changed to our wading clothes at the forke. Rain accelerated during the day, getting progressively heavier in spurts. Woody raised a couple of rainbows in a riffle right at the start but from then on we couldn't move a fish. We fished hard a mile up N Branch without a hook-up. I saw a lot of fine rainbows (3 to 5 lbs) in a big flat pool but they were wild as hell when I tried to cast to them. Dropped back to our base camp at the forke for lunch in the rain.

Started working our way down the Clinton after lunch. We saw fish in some of the pools but they were just loafing about - not rising. At 3 1/2 mile reach where Keith had dropped us earlier a waka came out of the bunch - very tame. I fed it crumb of coffee cake saved from lunch while Ted hunted for Woody, to no avail. I took a lot of pictures. Just before that I saw a New Zealand falcon come flying up the river. Looked like an overgrown sparrow hawk - long tail for a falcon of this size. It lit on a snag above me and preened. Also took photos of a very tame robin that came in for crumbs. Spotted a few deer tracks along N Branch.

Glade House to Leavenworth

Feb 22, 1978

Rained all night - very heavy some of the time. It was still coming down hard when we went to breakfast. Woody bundled up in rain gear and fished a bit in late morning. About then the rain started rising, but fast. We watched it come up about 10 feet in an hour or so, and by early afternoon whole trees were coming down. It became clear that our fishing of the Clinton was over. Mid-afternoon I conferred with Phil and he agreed that we might as well get out on the boat coming at 5:30 with a new load of Milford Trackers. So we packed up and Phil drove us to the dock in the rickety old truck.

The boat docked on time and a group of determined but concerned trackers got off, all wrapped up in their rain ponchos. It was pouring at the time, and I felt pang of compassion. They would have to wade a flooding creek a foot deep before they reached Glade House.

He pulled out in the launch shortly thereafter and the captain tried to thread his way through the logs and debris jamming out of the mouth of the Clinton. He went over a dead-head log with a loud clunk, but no harm done apparently.

Saw a number of native geese along the bluffs as we came down the lake. We have seen frequent nuptial flights in the last couple of days. Checked back in Leavenworth Hotel.

Ken McLeod property, mouth of Meriroa & Excelsior Creek
Feb 23, 1978

We set out to fish the lower reaches of the Meriroa where we had such a good day Feb 17. To our surprise and chagrin the river was the color of coffee with cream. We were milling around there trying to drive to the waian above the dam when we ran into a local farmer in trouble with a tractor that wouldn't start. So we drove him home to get a jumper, came back to the tractor and started it off on Toyota, then escorted him home. Whereupon he showed us some fishing spots on his farm. We settled on the waian at the junction of Excelsior Creek, and there we spent the day. The young farmer, Ken McLeod, joined us for lunch on the stream bank.

We found the pool where Excelsior Creek pours in to be well stocked with rainbows, of which we caught 12 on nymphs (they wouldn't come to a dry fly). A lot of them were in the 12 to 15" class but Woody got one very pretty 4 pounder. It rained off and on during the day and the wind blew a gale down canyon. I fished Excelsior Creek for a while but didn't raise a fish, although there are a few nice pools and deep riffles that should hold rainbows.

Ken is a duck hunter and says he has a good smattering on his place where mallards come. We have scarcely seen a mallard hereabouts, though Pintail ducks are everywhere in the fields and there are several dozen HZ scamp on the waterfront by the waian.

Mouth of Maranon River; Excelsior Creek/Waian

Feb 24, 1978

Yesterdays rain and high wind left us and the morning broke crisp and clear. We set out for the lower Maranon with high expectations. But despite the good weather and the nearly clear water of the river we couldn't raise a damn thing. After a couple of hours Woody and I went to the impoundment where the Maranon enters the Waian (now part of Manapouri Lake) and we found a few big brownies cruising the shore. They repulsed my dry flies but ^{one} took Woody's wooly-worm - a 3 pound brown. Returned to the car and found that Ted had landed just one rainbow (14" or so). So we ate lunch on the riverbank, feeding crabs to the black-billed gulls. There was a whole mob of Paradise ducks along the lower river. We noted again the rabbit "latrines" on mats of vegetation along the gravel bars. I have no idea why bunnies choose to defecate in specified places. What's the point?

After lunch we moved back to the rainbow hole at the mouth of Excelsior Creek. But this time there was very little action. We all caught a few little rainbows at the creek mouth (most too small to tally as "trout") and Woody hung a big brownie cruising along shore (4 lbs). But the whole day was disappointing in the lack of a general rise. After the big rain we were sure there would be some action.

One Lead paddock, Mararoa River 1 mi. above bridge

Feb 25, 1978

Ken had spoken to me of a part of his property quite isolated from road access. We asked to go there this morning and Ken gave us a map and instructions. Starting through a gate across from his house you wind up hills and over paddocks dropping down to the river above the so called "Gorge", about a mile up from the bridge. Lovely fishing water, but little action until about noon when Ted tied into a 23" rainbow on a dry fly (4 3/4 lbs.). For an hour thereafter we had a good rise in that long flat riffle, landing 12 fish between us, mostly rainbows 11 to 16". Woody and I each got a good brown - both about 15". The rise slowed and stopped after an hour and we caught no more. There was very little bug hatch to account for the rise - only a few small ephemerids flying at 11:30 to noon.

Woody took the water temperature mid-day - it was 55°F. This compares to 67° reading on the Mataura a week or two back. No wonder these Mararoa fish fight hard. By contrast though, this river looks comparatively sterile whereas the Mataura is brimming with nutrients and life. I suspect the fish population here is meager.

Every day we see flocks of 10 to 15 NZ scaup on the waterfront by Le Anau. Saw a large raft of ducks in the middle of the lake late PM - perhaps molting?

McLeod paddock, Mararoa River 1 mi. above bridge

Feb 26, 1978

On the way out this morning we stopped at the heliport a few miles S of here and looked over three deer carcasses hanging in the cooler. Two were stags with fairly heavy manes - said to be hybrids, wapiti/red deer. Heads and legs were cut off, paunch removed but heart and liver were still attached but hanging outside.

We fished the whole length of the horseshoe bend bordering McLeod. Everybody got one good fish - Woody a 30" rainbow, Ted an 18 1/2" rainbow, and I had an 18" brown (2 1/2 lbs.). Woody also had two smaller rainbows - total 5 fish. The river was light though compared to yesterday.

We quit at 4:00 and drove south to Bill Speight's place "Redcliff Station" about 5 mi. from McLeod. Had a few beers and a nice visit with Bill (address R.D. #1, Te Anau).

As we left Bill's place we saw a New Zealand Falcon mount a stoop on a small bird - junco of some type. The hawk came in low and fast, quite like an accipiter. As he closed on the bird it dodged smartly to one side and the hawk missed, banking sharply with its sizable tail spread. Hawk very dark on back - almost black.

Had dinner at the Colonial (Sunday night) and packed a bit for departure tomorrow.

Mossburn

Feb 27, 1978

Checked out of McAnan Hotel and drove to Mossburn where we met Mr. Ray Brady, General Manager of Southern Lakes Game Co. This little plant is affiliated with Alpine Helicopters and processes about a third of the deer exported to Germany. Ray showed us through all stages of processing, from unloading rough animals that helicopters had shot and dropped at collection points to the final boxing of wrapped meat for freezing and shipment. The crew was swift and very competent in their work.

Ray then took us out of town 8 mi. or so (SW) to the Munrobin Stag Range where Mr. Bernard Pirney runs about 850 red deer in well fenced paddocks. We walked over part of the ground, took pictures of some of the bands of deer, and examined the catchment pens where deer are processed.

Returned to the plant in Mossburn and found two big refrigerated Trucks unloading deer. One gathered animals from miscellaneous helicopter operators. The other was Alpine. We watched 50 some deer go into the production line - everything from big stags to spotted fawns.

Some general information about the business:

Helicopter hunting

Crews of two work from small machines - a pilot

Feb 27, 1978 (cont) and a gunner. An animal is shot
hung by its hamstrings from a cable, and carried to
a specified collection point where it is gutted and the
head taken off. Only the intestinal tract is removed.
Liver, heart & kidneys are left attached to diaphragm hanging
outside. Male glands are saved as well as antlers. About
10 of these are cabled together and a big helicopter comes in
and takes the lot to a roadhead or to Le Aruan
airport where a refrigerated shed is maintained by
Alpine. The big trucks bring the deer to Mossburn. Each
deer is tagged as to time of death. It must be in a fridge
by 10 hours, must be at the Mossburn packing plant by
72 hours.

An average head is worth \$150 dead, but a lot more if
captured alive - up to \$600. So they carry dart guns
and take them alive whenever possible. A special sack
is used to transport the live ones under the helicopter.

Venison industry

New Zealand game meat sent to Germany - \$9.7 million
dollars worth in 1970, and \$17.1 million in 1977. Game is a
luxury item in Germany, served in hotels and restaurants
mostly at Christmas season and some at Easter time. Meat
worth about \$11 per pound in Germany. In 1977 Germany
consumed 34,000 tons of game meat, some 16,000 tons
imported largely from New Zealand (some from Scotland,
Poland, some reindeer from Russia). Game from South
Africa is beginning to compete.

Feb 27, 1978 (cont.)

Miscellaneous parts of deer

Liver, heart + kidneys processed for pet food. Testes and penis frozen for Asian trade, along with antlers. Velvet antlers worth \$20 a pound. Antlers + velvet processed for health additives to general diet (not just aphrodisiac).

Deer farming

Deer are being raised on farms and sold to other prospective breeders. Live deer are worth so much more than dead ones that very few are being butchered. Reminds me of the silver fox and chinchilla days. Costs of fencing and feeding are so high that industry cannot last beyond present growing boom period. The one source of income is velvet from antlers. The blue-robin herd of 850 yielded about 400 lbs of velvet antler, at \$20 would be \$8000 - a small income considering the cost. I wouldn't invest my money in this business.

Gore, Croydon Lodge

Checked back into our old quarters in the afternoon. Reports are good fishing hereabouts. After dinner we went for the evening rise. Woody walked to the gravel works and caught two on nymphs - 12 and 16". Ted and I drove to Chelmer place a few miles down river. Good rise on nymphs, little feeding on phots. I caught a 16 inches on a nymph.

Mimihau River, 2 to 5 mi. Above Jack Ayers place

Feb 28, 1978

Last fishing day. We drove to Ayers and on Jack's recommendation went upstream on the Mimihau. Caught nothing up high so dropped downstream for lunch. After lunch both Ted and Woody had some action for an hour or so - then nothing. Ted ended up with 6 legal fish (10" to 18") and Woody had one. It appeared that there was a midday rise, terminating about 2 PM.

Mataura River above Otama

After supper we were about to fish the Gravel Pit when a Mr. John King asked us to accompany him to a new site, which we accepted. Crossed the river at Otamata bridge, then went NW about 5 mi. to road end. This is about opposite the Iron Church place. I found a good rise at the tail of a long flat pool. No action on assorted dry flies or nymphs but I then tried a fly given me by John Aho which floats (just barely) in the surface film. About size 18, grey body, sparse hackle. I promptly took two fish - 20 and 19 inches, by which time it was pitch dark and I had to quit. [Fly - "Still-born Caddis" - Swisher / Richards].

Home to California, March 1, 1978

Fishing localities (see numbers on map)

1. Harry Rae property, Cathe Flat
2. Joan Church - curved Lombardy junipers
3. Sims/Cullen - Nicholson Road
4. MacDonald property
5. Waipahi River
6. A.J. Martin - shelf rock, electric fence
7. Kirby Island, Wyndham
8. Gravel pit, Gore
9. Chalmers - papayas, lost knife
10. Myers - Wyndham/Mataura - 10 gates
11. Kowhai Grove, Mimiha River
12. Mimiha below Jack Ayers
13. Eglington River, The Bluffs 20 mi above Te Anau
14. Eglington River, Knobs Flat
15. Mouth Mararua River (x Waiau)
16. N end of North Mavora Lake
17. 1 mi. up Millipid Track, Clinton River
18. North Branch Clinton River
19. Mouth Excelsior Creek, Waiau River
20. The Lead Station, 1 mi. up Mararua River
21. Mimiha 2 1/2 mi. above Ayers
22. Mataura above Otama (across from Joan Church ②)

Fish landed - New Zealand, 1978

<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality (map no.)</u>	<u>PM</u>	<u>TK</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>Total</u>
Feb 2	3	1	1	1	3
3	2	2	2	1	5
4	6	0	1	1	2
5	4	0	0	0	0
6	3	1	0	0	1
7	2, 8	0	0	0	0
8	7	0	1	1	2
9	3, 9	1	0	1	2
10	1	0	1	0	1
11	7	0	1	0	1
12	1, 8	0	1	1	2
13	11	0	0	1	1
14	12	1	3	0	4
16	13, 14	1	0	1	2
17	15	2	4	3	9
18	18, 15	0	0	0	0
19	14	0	0	0	0
20	17	1	1	0	2
21	18	0	0	0	0
22	Rained out				
23	19	4	2	6	12
24	15, 19	1	1	4	6
25	20	6	3	3	12
26	20	1	1	3	5
27	8, 9	1	0	2	3
28	21, 22	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>
Mar. 1	(Trip home) Totals:	25	29	30	84

Sagehen Creek Field StationJune 27, 1978

Betty and I arrived at our cabin about 2 PM. Vernon helped me carry in the gear and groceries.

Sagehen Creek is very high. Meadows are extra green and lush after a wet spring. About 4 PM it began to rain and hail with some pretty snappy lightning bolts. I sat out in the kitchen area cheering the storm with my dog Sake standing behind me under the kitchen counter looking dubious.

The storm passed and we cooked a nice dinner.

June 28, 1978

Half clear - half cloudy, and pretty cool. We did a lot of chores around the cabin, including splitting wood, arranging the kitchen, and gathering pine needles for the dog box. I started Sake on a regular retrieving routine, 3 times a day about 10 to 15 min, each. He still does not know how to mark a fall. I hope to overcome this by giving him lots of practice.

I went fishing after supper near the cabin and did not raise a single fish. Water too high and cold. Vernon, Nancy and Seth came to visit.

June 29, 1978

I put out the hummingbird feeders the evening we arrived and had the first customer next morning at 7:30 AM. By now, two days later, we have a constant noisy clientele of at least 15 or 20 female calliopes and an occasional female rufous. They squabble constantly over whose turn it is to drink but I guess they all get their share.

Birds by our cabin and meadow are about as usual -- robin, song sparrow, flicker, junco, Audubon warbler, and calliope hummer are abundant. See an occasional yellow warbler, western tanager, chipping sparrow, Williamson sapsucker, white-br. nuthatch, Empidonax flycatcher, and western wood peewee. Normally we have a territorial pair of peewees but this year they are not at home in our meadow.

Several chipmunks and golden-mantled ground squirrels live in our yard and we see chickarees daily in the big trees by the stream.

June 30, 1978

I split some wood before going to Truckee for shopping, and as I rested momentarily I spotted a doe and a little wobbly-kneed fawn down by the creek. A low whistle gave Betty the signal so she was watching from the house. The doe worked along the streambank, little guy struggling through the tall grass behind her, to the pool where we have a nest box for water

ouzel. There she walked right into the deepest part and after taking a drink she went straight across to the other bank. Betty and I both felt like shouting "No! No! It's shallower downstream," but of course we held our advice. The little fawn went in deeper and deeper until his tummy hit the cold water and then he plunged forward, slipping and stumbling till he made the bank. He shook like a puppy dog and looked none the worse as he followed mom into the forest.

After lunch and a nap we drove upstream to the aspen grove to get a new fork for the fireplace. Beavers have settled into the aspens just above the box canyon and they are knocking down trees like mad. I took my fork from the top of a beaver-felled tree. Millions of mosquitos there.

July 1, 1978

I awoke an emeritus professor! Betty commented it was the first time she had slept with an emeritus professor, which I suppose may be true.

So after breakfast and splitting some wood I went fishing. From 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM I worked the water in front of our cabin (about 1/4 mile) and took seven fish -- 5 rainbows and 2 brookies, all 7 to 9 inches; ~~but~~ I found if you put a dry fly down the riffles again and again you could tease a fish into taking it. No action in the flat pools.

As I was changing flies about opposite the cabin I heard a ruckus in a tall cluster of lodgepole pines where I knew the flickers had a nest. A chickaree was trying to approach the nest and the parent flickers were actively and vociferously beating him off. I guess they won, for later in the evening I saw the male feeding youngsters in the nest hole.

A male calliope hummingbird showed up at the feeders, and I collected him with a slingshot, and #8 shot, since we have no male in the skin collection. We have one now!

July 2, 1978

That chickaree and the flickers were at it again this morning. I feel quite sure that the squirrel has aspirations about those baby flickers, but he can't cope with the parents.

Mid-morning two young rufous hummingbirds showed up and took command of the two feeders, one on each. Between them they kept a dozen or more females from feeding. I decided the collection could use one of them too, so I got out the trusty slingshot and nailed him. He makes a nice skin, about half molted from juvenile (female type) plumage to full male.

I cooked a big stew for supper.

July 3, 1978

Went to town to get camera films and a few miscellaneous groceries.

One of Bob Hoffmann's grad students from Univ. Kansas, name Howard Leviston, showed up to start a comparative study of chickarees and western gray squirrels. He will be live trapping around here for 10 days or so.

Had lunch at Marshall and Jenny Whites, along with Jim Yoakum from BLM Reno and a young couple from his outfit. Don S? He is studying deer near Ely.

After lunch Marty Raphael, Steve Osaki, and I skinned birds, selecting specimens from the sack of frozen bodies accumulated in the lab. Among others I put up a winter wren collected by Vern in January. It was fat!

Barbecued a chicken, using some of the last sticks of mtn. mahogany brought to me as a gift so many years ago by Jim Nee.

July 4, 1978

Split the usual jag of wood; then set up my camera and took pictures of hummingbirds and chipmunks. Went down to main camp, rewrapped yesterday's birds, and photographed young golden-mantled ground squirrels and young marmots in the station yard. The kids feed them and they get very tame.

On two occasions I have jumped Zapus on a rotten log in the meadow. Each mouse ran the length of the log, then popped into the grass.

The cook Dave Jones invited us to steak dinner tonight. It is Seth Hawthorne's birthday, besides being the 4th of July.

July 5, 1978

Spent two hours with Vern Hawthorne going over the Station and discussing future plans and needs for improvement and expansion. Main job at the moment is rebuilding the water control structures above and below the underwater observation tank. This will be done this fall, hopefully. Next we have enough money to put a new floor in the Johnson cabin and to buy wall paneling for Vern to install in the dining room this winter. Then we'll see where we are financially.

Howard Leviton reports that he caught and marked 3 chickarees his first day of trapping. Pretty good start.

Worked all afternoon on Hal Salwasser's thesis.

Dinner at Hawthornes.

Sherman Chickering ranch, Soda Springs, American River.

July 6, 1978

Packed up our gear at Sagehen and closed the cabin. Did a bit of shopping in Truckee and had lunch before heading for Soda Springs. Arrived there at 2:30 PM. Sherman put us up in the big old Chickering mansion, since his guest quarters were out of commission -- the heavy snow had crushed the porch and severed the plumbing. Another guest, Eleanor B. and her son Max were in the Mark Hopkins cabin.

Started to rain and hail about supper time and some lively lightning with it. Kept storming half the night and enough water fell to raise the level of the river considerably.

July 7, 1978

After breakfast I set out to fish the American River above the falls. Worked my way up for four hours without catching a fish big enough to eat. The high flow and low temperature (still lots of snow melt) turned the trout off. I quit finally at 2 PM, a mile or so above the Bailey property.

When I started out this morning I encountered a fine 4-point buck just above the Alan Chickering house. Also a small doe. Saw deer tracks all day but no more animals.

Snowflowers are in full bloom but there aren't many of them. I photographed one with a swallowtail butterfly clinging to the spike.

In the evening I read Robert Lexalt's biography of his father, the old Basque sheep-herder.

July 8, 1978

Packed up and left Soda Springs at 9:30. It takes me about an hour to drive out to the highway at Norden.

Saw a deer close to The Cedars and several chickarees along the way. Home about 1:30 PM.

Deam River about 350 mi. NW of Vancouver

Steelhead trout

Our party:

Sterling Kelley, Pinole

Herb Josephs, Vallejo

Jed Kusseff - Blue River, Ore.

Steve Kahl - San Francisco

Jim Adams - San Francisco

DSR - Berkeley

Guides and hosts

Harryl Hodson and wife Nancy

Randy Hodson

Aug 18, 1978

Arrived on charter airplane from Bella Coola, Wilderness Airlines. Were met at airstrip, mouth of the Deam by Randy in an old car. Drove to boat landing above the box canyon. Went on to camp in two jet boats. Had lunch and fished a couple of hours before dinner. A black bear sow and two cubs prowled the bank across from camp. I hooked a fish but it pulled the fly right off my leader - will use better knots from now on.

Jed hooked and landed a big chinook - weight something over his 28 lb. scale. Pretty well spent.

Aug 19, 1978

Fished up river. I took two fish in little pockets below the "Flat Hole", 11 and 11½ lbs. Steve took

Aug 19 (cont) six fish in the pocket below Shannon pool.
Watched a goshawk chase a crow in wild flight but the crow got away.

Grizzly at wolf tracks on sandbar at Flat Hole.
Sockeye salmon are spawning in little run back of the bar - bright red with green heads.

Aug 20, 1978.

I caught a silver salmon (Coho) of about 8 lbs. in AM. After lunch Barryl flew me up Kimsquit River which enters Skeena from the north. Chin salmon were spawning in riffles. Saw over 50 bald eagles. Barryl hunts gizzlers here and we stopped to inspect his hunting cabin. Grizzly tracks and moose tracks on bars, and a bear had been rubbing its back on the cabin.

Aug 21

I caught a small steelhead about 8 lbs. Barryl hooked a monster chinook and deliberately broke it off. Lots of mergansers on the river, some of them flightless (young I presume). Bunches of Sock up to 30. Barryl saw a goshawk chasing a crow in same area where I saw it two days ago.

Big chinook salmon are spawning in gravel runs right out in main stream. They look like submarines moving out of the way of our boat.

Aug. 22, 1978

The river which was high and cloudy when we arrived has been dropping each day and clearing at same time. Today it was down 2½ inches from yesterday.

The three boys in the other boat had a fabulous morning at Shannon's. I caught one 12 lb. male at confluence of two currents in upper Flat Hole and shortly thereafter hooked another which ran with half my backing then started jumping far downstream and shook the hook. The fish I landed was 32" long, 16" girth.

After lunch above the upper logging bridge (far upstream) Sterling caught a nice 14 lb. male.

We see lots of spotted sandpipers and mergansers, a few dippers.

Aug 23, 1978

Fished all day in the Flat Hole with only one strike, while Sterling caught 4 fish in front of me and behind me. I decided my fly wasn't sinking enough so changed lines at noon to the sinking shooting head. But nobody had much action in afternoon. There was a sandy hail/thunder storm that pretty well put the fish down.

Took photos of spawning sockeye salmon at Flat Hole. There were fresh gizzys and wolf tracks there. Today I saw a group of crows chasing the goshawks - reverse signals! Darryl caught a spent chinook male about 40 lbs.

Aug. 24, 1978

There is a substantial crowd on the river today - 67 campers plus 17 in the commercial camps. They are getting rides up the logging road to upper bridge and floating down river on inflated rafts. Guides are furious of course.

In pocket below Shannon Hole I hooked and landed a lovely jumping female which I decided to keep and bring home. She was jumping fresh from the ocean and weighed 14 lbs. Jumped seven times.

Fished till dark downstream but no luck. No one else kept a fish but I got mine home packed inside my waders in my tackle bag.

Guides and fishermen agree that this is the lightest run and poorest fishing in memory. Didn't seem to be many steelhead in the river.

Aug. 25, 1978

Fished in morning for a couple of hours but I stayed home and packed. No luck.

We left camp about 11 AM, met the airplane at the strip at noon. Flew out over the high country, past Mt. Waddington.

The summary of fish hooked and caught by the six members of our party see next page.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Steelhead</u>		<u>Salmon</u>
	<u>Hooked</u>	<u>Landed</u>	
Aug 18, 1978	5	2	1 jack, 1 chinook
Aug 19	15	12	
Aug 20	8	4	1 coho
Aug 21	14	10	3 coho
Aug 22	15	13	1 coho, 1 jack
Aug 23	8	7	
Aug 24	8	5	5 jack + coho
Aug 25	0	0	
	<u>73</u>	<u>53</u>	

Turlock, Calif.

Sept. 29 and 30, 1978

Ed Channing invited us down for the last two days of dove season. Friday PM we went to a ranch about 10 mi. SW of town, within a mile or so of the San Joaquin River, where birds have been coming to a millet field. Saw 40 or more on telephone wires near the field, so we deployed and waited for them to come in for the coming feed. At 4 PM the flight started hot and heavy. I had a limit in about 45 minutes (11 birds down with 14 shells, 1 lost across a ditch). Betty had lots of action but wasn't hitting very well - she ended up with 5. Ed didn't hunt much but still got 7 or so. Crops of most were empty (just coming in to chew down) but some had millet. The field had been disced and dragged but the birds still found plenty of seeds on the dusty surface.

Next morning I feared the area might have been burned out and abandoned, but the flight was heavier than ever! I limited in half hour, before the sun came over the Sierra. Ed, his dad, and George and Neal - ? from Santa Rosa all got limits, even with a lot of poor shooting. It was as concentrated and determined a dove flight as I had ever seen. Betty wasn't up to the early PM hunt and slept in. My shooting today wasn't so good - 10 birds with 17 shells. She retrieved all my birds both days - he lower doves. No broken skin either.

West Betten Pond
Sorenson Ranch

Season: 1978

Date	Blind No.	Guest	Duck Species						Total Ducks	Other Birds				Geese	
			Pintail	Mallard	Widgeon	G-V Teal	Am. Teal	Pheasants		Jacksnipe	Kestrels	Species	Total		
Oct 21, 1978	2	Ry Barrett	10		1				11	4		3			
Oct 22	4		2						2			3			
Oct 25	4								0		3	4			
Oct 28	2		1						1	2	2	6			
Nov 4	4		1	1					2			11	(8 Nov 1 water)		
Nov 8	2		1	1					2		7	14			
Nov 11	5		4	1	1				6		3	16			
Nov 18	2	Luna							0	6		18			
Nov 22	5		1	1		1			3		1	22			
Dec 13	6		1	1			1		3	with 7 water	7	19			
Dec 16	2		1						1	1		23			
Dec 23	5, 4		2	5					7		8	28			
Dec 27	5, 4		3	4					7			31			
Dec 30	2		6						6	4		25/20			
Jan 3	4		3	1					4		4	21/27			
Jan 17	5						2		2			15			
Jan 20	4								0	1		15/21			
													57		

With Ray Barrett
11 ducks
4 Volare pheasants

Sorenson Farms

Oct 21, 1978

We exercised the solemn ceremony of opening the duck season - moved into our rooms, last minute adjustments in blinds & decays, lots of drinks and a big ~~steak~~^{stew} dinner (my deer), and finally out to the blinds before daylight. Pretty fair flight for about two hours in which time Ray Barrett and I took 10 spruce and a nidgeon. He worked very well - we never did leave the blind, he retrieved them all including a couple of divers.

Hunted pheasants after lunch and found a lot of wild birds in the hot corner - between us we took about a dozen of which only two were liberated. Too damn hot to hunt very long so we quit early, had a shower and a nap. Steak dinner and baked potatoes.

Oct 22

Flight on Sunday was pretty light, despite a brisk SW breeze. I had action down at #4 but couldn't hit them. Ted limited in #2, Dennis got a bird or two in #6.

Very few snipe on the marsh yet - not enough to make it worth a hunt. Lots of other shore birds though including far more yellow legs than I ever recall seeing. Some stilts, avocets, and of course dowitchers. Saw 3 hectorls coming in Friday and 3 going out Sunday.

Sorenson

Oct 25, 1978

I sat in #4 and was shunked. Could have taken a teal or widgeon but followed the "spig syndrome". I did get three snipe however. Bob retrieved them nicely.

Oct 28

I had high choice and sat in #2 for several hours. Shot 1 shell early (killed a high cock spig) and never did fire again. Big north wind built up and birds came in from the south and settled on the ground near the stacks but none came toward #2. I did get three in #6. I took two snipe walking out - boy they could do tricks in that wind! Also two cock pheasants after lunch.

Nov. 4

In #4 I shot three shells from 6 AM to 9:30 and came up with a mallard and a spig. I did get three in #2, Woody me in #1, Dennis & Justin shunked in #6.

We agree that the flights are about the worst we can remember for the first two weeks of the season. Poor kills also on main Sorenson Pond and Eike Club. Continued warm sunny weather and northern ducks are loafing on the Canadian prairie. Going out I jumped 15 snipe but they were so damn wild I couldn't kill a one.

Woody and I counted 11 hestich going out to Vacaville.

Sorenson

Nov 8, 1978

Another flat calm, hot sunny day with a very scant duck flight. I was just choice and went to #2. Shot at three ducks and bagged two - a cock sprig and a hen mallard. The latter fell wing-tipped toward the north levee. She chased her all the way to the levee and finally lost her after a series of dives. Several hours later he picked her out of one of the dense cattail clumps in the ditch beyond the levee.

After lunch Woody, Ted and I went after jacksnipe along the north edge of Round Lake (permission Selby Nohr). Found lots of birds, gauged up in specific pockets. Woody got 10 and I took 3 - find that I cannot wade in marsh like I used to. Also saw lots of pheasants - perhaps 50 or 60 while we walked the low levees for snipe. Regular pheasant season opens next Saturday, Nov. 11.

Regarding the duck flight, we all agree that it is considerably lighter than in previous years at the same time. Still almost wholly sprig - no influx of small ducks like teal, shovellers and widgeon. Presumably the continued mild weather has allowed them to hang on to the north.

A prairie falcon came over me at 50 ft. in #2 blind. Beautiful bird. Did not seem to be hunting. We see very few hawks now, I suppose because of the conversion of pasture to row crops.

Sawson

Nov. 11, 1978

1 mallard
4 sprig
1 widgeon
2 snipe

I was last choice and ended up high gun. Woody and Ward in #2 (3 birds), Ted in #6 (5 sprigs), Dennis in #4 (5 mixed ducks), and I was in #5 with six ducks and two jacksnipe. Picked up one more snipe on the way out. There was a strong NW wind all last night and this morning till noon (20 mi ±). A heavy northward flight continued all morning passing east of us. But we got a little spin-off and had occasional birds coming in all morning. At #5 the shooting was mostly pretty high but I did surprisingly well (often in a wind I can't hit my hat). Made one very high double on fat sprigs out of a flock of a dozen or so. Wind quit about when we did, at noon, and I will venture a guess that the ducks sit pretty quiet for a day or so.

Ward set crowded traps last evening but caught hardly a thing. Apparently the beandies have gone into the mud for the winter. A couple of weeks ago he got some 60 in one trap.

After a bit of lunch we went pheasant hunting in the newly cut corn at north end of Valsar. Found roads of birds, and the boys got about 10 between three of them. I didn't get a shot!

I came home early to cook steaks for Betty, Kay, Sally (who has Gavin here for first visit, two weeks old).

Sorenson

Nov 18, 1978

6 pheasants
(2 Valais, 4 cock
untagged)

Took Lure to #2 blind, on my first choice, and we never fired a shell nor did anyone else on the pond except Jason (in #5) who shot once. Breeze was brisk part of morning, all looked good, except for no ducks! So we took it out on the pheasants. Found a few in hot corner, a lot in the timber pond.

Sorenson

Nov. 22

3 ducks
1 snipe

I went to #5 as last choice, and had several shots - better at least than last Saturday! You could hardly say that the flight was dazzling, however. Sike is still having trouble with long retriever. I knocked one greenhead down near the big trees along the road and the pup rushed over there but stopped 20 yds short. Fortunately the bird was dead so he didn't get into the heavy cover. Later the dog lost a diving teal in pretty shallow water - it completely escaped us.

Our count on kestrels continues to go up. Now we are running over 20 birds, indicating a considerable influx in last couple of weeks.

Off to Mexico next week end, so I left Sike at Orban-Kennel, Cordelia.

Club La Grulla

Ensenada, Baja California

Betty and I left Berkeley Saturday Nov. 25th, spent a day with Sally and family and went on to La Grulla arriving Nov. 27. From then on I hunted quail every day except one through Dec 5. We left for home Dec 6 and arrived back in Berkeley Dec. 7.

The La Grulla Clubhouse and facility is a delightful old adobe building with small but comfortable individual rooms and community men's & women's bath rooms. The central living room with massive fireplace is most attractive. In the dining room the long table holds 36 and a smaller table in one end can handle 8 more. Normal routine is hunters breakfast at 6:30 AM, packed lunches for all who want them, dinner at 7:30 PM. Every member hunts quail, as do many of their wives. Few use dogs because of the cactus and (earlier in season) the rattlesnakes. There are two guides on the staff (Alejo and Felix) who know the coveys and locate them from the automobile, by seeing them or by calling and getting a reply. You don't get out and start hunting until a covey is located. You then chase the bunch as hard as you can go through several flushes until they scatter. Then singles are walked up at leisure.

La Brea (cont)

In the seven days that I hunted we generally had all the hunting we wanted before lunch. Coveys ran from 100 to 350 and as a rule one covey was all you needed to limit. Once in a while we encountered small bunches (30, 50...) and there you wouldn't pursue. I shot moderately well, mostly keeping under 2 shells per bird. Best day I got 9 with 13 shells. There is no club standard about precise shooting however, and even excellent shots like Chuck Cotton take a lot of long shots with little hope of a clean kill. A big covey is jokingly referred to as a "four-box covey" and this isn't too far from the truth!

Hunting without dogs is a tribulation not easy to get used to. You spend a lot of time looking for down birds and of course you lose many runners and even some dead birds. There is a surprising amount of ground cover here, some of it shoulder high or higher. Although rainfall is low I think coastal fog supports shrub growth. Calif. sage, monkey flower, wild rose, desert willow, cholla and *Opuntia cactus* are a few of the dominants. On some slopes rock outcrops and tumbled boulders serve importantly as cover.

Where we hunted there were agricultural fields largely of barley with substantial weed growth

La Grulla (cont.)

of turkey mullin and many other weeds. I looked in many crops and found nearly all filled with a small legume whose identity I never could ascertain. The plants were no longer visible but the seeds apparently were everywhere. Some contained turkey mullin seeds and a few had a bit of greenery → surprisingly little considering that early rain had raised a fine lawn of sprouted grass. The forbs were just sprouting → pinhead size still.

The year 1978 apparently is one of the real boom years in quail numbers. Everyone remarked on this, big coveys and lots of them. This was further reflected in the amazing age ratio — 608 young per 100 adults, based on a sample of 333! In all the years I have fooled with Cal quail this is by far the highest crop of young I ever have seen. See next page for details based on birds killed by the parties I hunted with, and on Dec 2 on all the birds taken by La Grulla hunters (I tallied them on the back porch).

Of considerable interest to me was the unusually low representation of adult males in the population. Adult females outnumbered adult males 29 to 18 (or 100:62). In the McMillan's data from Shandon there is a tendency for adult males to exceed adult females in increasing

Summary sex & age records, Catig. gnat, taken by La Grulla hunters while we were there

<u>Date</u>	Adult		Immature		Total
	♂	♀	♂	♀	
Nov. 28, 1978	0	2	6	17	25
Nov 30	0	3	16	15	34
Dec 1	0	0	6	1	7
Dec 2	0	2	16	18	36
Dec 2	11	15	72	53	151
Dec 3	2	4	15	13	34
Dec 4	1	2	11	12	26
Dec 5	4	1	7	8	20
	—	—	—	—	—
	18	29	149	137	= 333

$$\frac{47 \text{ adults}}{286 \text{ young}} = 608 \text{ young} : 100 \text{ adults}$$

$$\frac{29 \text{ ad } \text{♀♀}}{18 \text{ ad } \text{♂♂}} = 62 \text{ ad } \text{♂♂} : 100 \text{ ad } \text{♀♀}$$

Club de Cazadores La Grulla, Ensenada, Baja California
 Sex and age of quail killed Dec 9, 1978 to Jan 21, 1979
 (data assembled by Espie and guides Alejo and Felix)

Fecha	Machos		Hembras		Total
	Adulto	Joven	Adulto	Joven	
12/9/78	14	39	10	50	113
12/10	9	17	8	14	48
12/11	2	14	4	9	29
12/13	3	17	6	11	37
12/17	3	7	3	5	18
12/19	13	15	12	21	61
12/20	5	12	5	4	26
12/29	11	12	7	11	41
12/30	16	11	10	9	46
12/31	13	19	20	17	69
1/2/79	4	4	3	2	13
1/3	11	11	10	11	43
1/11	21	22	20	29	92
1/12	8	12	7	24	51
1/13	22	26	16	36	100
1/14	21	22	12	17	72
1/15	14	18	8	13	53
1/16	7	11	3	1	22
1/21	13	15	10	17	55
	<u>210</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>301</u>	= 989
Nov 28 to Dec 5	18	149	29	137	= 333
	<u>228</u>	<u>453</u>	<u>203</u>	<u>438</u>	= 1322

Club de Cazadores La Grulla, Ensenada, Baja California
 Sex and age of quail killed Dec 9, 1978 to Jan 21, 1979
 (data assembled by Espie and guides Alejo and Felix)

Fecha	Machos		Hembras		Total
	Adults	Juven	Adults	Juven	
12/9/78	14	39	10	50	113
12/10	9	17	8	14	48
12/11	2	14	4	9	29
12/13	3	17	6	11	37
12/17	3	7	3	5	18
12/19	13	15	12	21	61
12/20	5	12	5	4	26
12/29	11	12	7	11	41
12/30	16	11	10	9	46
12/31	13	19	20	17	69
1/2/79	4	4	3	2	13
1/3	11	11	10	11	43
1/11	21	22	20	29	92
1/12	8	12	7	24	51
1/13	22	26	16	36	100
1/14	21	22	12	17	72
1/15	14	18	8	13	53
1/16	7	11	3	1	22
1/21	13	15	10	17	55
	<u>210</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>301</u>	= 989
Nov 28 to Dec 5	18	149	29	137	= 333
	<u>228</u>	<u>453</u>	<u>203</u>	<u>438</u>	= 1322

La Grulla (cont.)

proportion as the crop of young birds increases (see Fig. 48, p. 115 in quail book). However, I noted an exception in 1952 → the highest proportion of young I've ever had (430 im.: 100 ad) — when adult ♂♂ and ♀♀ were about equal. I explained this rather lamely by supposing that in boom years males suffered the risks of "motherhood" usually associated with nesting females. There seems to be something to this idea when in 1978 I find adult females substantially outnumbering adult males. I wonder how this works?

There are thousands of mourning doves wintering in the vicinity of Ensenada but they are highly concentrated in a few areas, not generally distributed. The area of major concentration is the valley called Agua Blanca about 25 mi SE of La Grulla. During the day we found them loafing on the ground or in low shrubs, often in groups of 50 to 100. They were feeding largely on turkey mullein. We shot quite a few incidental to the quail hunting. Saw no white-wings.

A very small cottontail rabbit is quite numerous but black-tailed jackrabbits are scarce — would see only one or so a day. No deer in this populated area — all poached out apparently.

About 5000 ducks on Ensenada Bay near the mouth, mostly widgeon — some godwits, teal, and sprig. No mallards.

3 ducks
7 snipe (with Woody)

Sorenson

Dec 13, 1978

Hazy air, but threatened rain did not materialize. No wind at daylight. There was some high flight but very little down at our level. Between us we took 7 ducks of which only 2 were sprig. At Sherman Chuchering's invitation Ted shot on Sorenson's pond but had only two shots, and took one sprig. Dennis took young Justin to #2 but even the teal and spoonies avoided us. He had scarcely shot his gun. My only teal shot was at a handsome little drake cinnamon, which I got. There were a few geese in the air and Dennis took a shot at a single honker that came by fairly low.

After giving up on ducks at 10 AM we went after the snipe, but the big concentration the boys found here last Sunday was largely dissipated. Woody and I between us finally came up with seven. Silby Mober and his gang got 32 (4 limits) on the north end of Round Jarve. It sounded like a war up there.

We are at a loss to explain the poor flight of ducks in the Sorenson area. Ted feels it is the change in land use, from pasture to row crops. This is as good an explanation as any.

On the way out we counted 19 kestrels.

1 spig
1 whole pheasant

Sorensons

Dec 16, 1978

Per soup fog, from daylight till 11:30 when it started to lift, but not break. We sat in the blinds till noon, staring at the opaque face of fog hoping to see a duck pop out. Once in a while this actually happened but you rarely are ready to get off a shot. I got off just one at a lone cock spig that came over me from behind, and damned if I didn't wing tip him. He hit in the middle of the pond (I heard him go down, couldn't see) and took after him with the dog. He got on the fresh scent and tracked him far enough to steer me on the right bearing. Through the fog I finally saw a little bill cutting the surface and I shot at the bill, thereby putting the dog on the bird and he brought him in - a nice fat duck.

Snipe were wild and very hard to see so we didn't spend any time on them.

Hunted pheasants after lunch with Morris Cox and Alan Stace. Found a few birds in hot corner and adjoining ditches. I checked out early with one hen.

En route home about half way to Vassville I came to a steel power line tower in a sugar beet field with pheasants sitting all over it like decorations on a Christmas tree. At one moment I counted 16, but birds kept flying up out of the field to alight on the steel bars while others flew back down. Cocks and hens both. Very odd.

5 sprig
1 spoonie

Tule Goose Club, adjoining Grey Lodge on west
Dec. 20, 1978

Mr. Henry Leone invited me for a dinner to talk about a possible California Waterfowl Museum, with a duck shoot next morning. John Cowan was there for dinner as well as Marc Leone and two other club members - Andy and Wayne. We had a lovely duck dinner and a good talk.

Tuesday was clear, cold and calm, with ice around the edges of the ponds that didn't melt until noon. I started out badly - as we waded out toward the blinds mallards started boiling out of the timber behind us and coming over in the half dark. Henry got shells in his gun first and shot, I followed and got one, which turned into a spoonie! Ah well. From then on I stayed with sprigs and got five by quitting time 2:30 PM.

Off and on during the morning there were magnificent flights of snow geese and ducks. Relatively few species and only a couple of flocks of honkers. There were actually more sandhill cranes than honkers. Lots of widgeon and gadwall worked low over our ponds as well as spoonies and a few green-winged teal. Two flocks of white pelicans sailed over majestically. The tules were full of short-billed marsh wrens which added interest. No shore birds at all!

Sorenson

Dec 23, 1978

Fog lay heavily all day in the valley Dec. 22 and we were anything but optimistic when we went to bed that night. In the morning the fog was still thick but it had lifted so that there was visibility for some distance horizontally, and up about 100 yards vertically. Birds were working through and under it and in fact were coming down trying to alight especially toward our south end. I had occasional shots in #5 and Woody was shooting up a storm in #4, finally calling to me (about 8:30 AM) that he was limited. I had three good birds by then but moved to #4 nevertheless and finished my limit in less than an hour — 5 mallards and 2 sprigs. It appeared that ducks were feeding in the corn stubble west of our pond and from time to time little groups would come to the pond for water. All had full crops of corn and mud on their feet. There were birds working the main pond too — Ted limited in #2 before I did and Alvin and Jason had quite a lot of action in #6. It was all in all our best shoot of the season based mostly on mallards.

Woody and I then went to work on jacksnipe and had 14 of them in an hour — killed mostly by Woody. He was shooting like a champ.

4 greenheads
3 fat sprigs

Sorenson

Dec 27, 1978

This proved to be one of the GREAT DAYS in my duck hunting experience. The pond was stuff with ducks when we went to the blinds, but they all flew away and things were pretty quiet for a while. Then under the high fog (150 yds or so) ducks started streaming back to our pond from corn fields somewhere to the west. They came in flocks of thousands and swirled down on us with noise like a tornado. When one or another of us would shoot the birds would flare up and disappear in the fog, but in ten minutes here would come 5000 more in the same pattern. This continued until all three of us had 7 big fat birds apiece. All were stuffed with corn and all had muddy feet and bills. They wanted some water to clean up and have a drink I guess, and we were the first pond in line of their return flight. The clubs east and north of us had very little action - we were the vortex of the pattern.

In addition to the sprigs and mallards there were lots of teal, shovellers, and widgeon. Swans and geese livened the scene with their voices, but they did not come down to the pond (though there were hons here on the pond at daylight).

After this great experience we did not harass snipe or pheasants but went home early.

6 cock sprigs
4 velvet pheasants

Sorenson

Dec 30, 1978

Today afternoon we had a nice pheasant hunt at the "hot corner" and along the road headed west. When we shot at hot corner about 40 birds rolled out and headed west along the road. Ted dashed down in his pick-up and headed part of them and we ended up with 9 birds.

The ponds were stiff with ducks and we went out Saturday PM with high expectations which were not disappointed. All of us took limits of sprigs and mallards, and young Justin Jorgensen had 5 birds, including two greenheads. It was a festive day. Ducks by the thousands were feeding in the corn fields west of our pond (also southwest and northwest) and we had continuous shooting at birds coming to the water to clean their bills and feet. Again today there were packs of mallards and I turned down a dozen or more close shots to stay with cock sprigs. I took my self-imposed limit of 5, but one was a bit shiny so I took an additional 1st one.

Quite a few geese around at daylight including hawks, spruce and moose. I had only one close shot, at a single snow, and turned it down.

Some spig country parties but not as many as I saw at Lake Goose last week. All ducks were full of corn and mud, many with globes of mud stuck to their feet and bills. Several had long strings of grass or corn shucks stuck to their feet and trailing behind in flight.

3 Cack sprig
1 greenhead
4 Snipe

Sorenson

Jan 3, 1979

No fog, no wind, just some high clouds signifying arrival of a front. At daylight there were clouds of ducks and geese over the corn field west of us, but shortly after dawn they left and shooting was pretty thin the rest of the morning. I had two Cack sprigs in the first half hour but then missed a lot of shots and didn't score again until after 11:00. I don't know why my shooting was so atrocious - it's been getting worse recently.

In the clear light birds were much more cautious than they have been recently under high fog and haze. All shooting was long, and many circling flocks didn't come down at all - simply departed. Another factor may have been that the corn fields are dry on top - not sticky as they were the week last week. The ducks had no need to come to water to clean up their bills and feet. Relatively few mallards today.

On the contrary, the goose show was superb. Big mobs of honkers, specs, and cackling geese, and even a few snows were cruising overhead or dropping into the corn. Dennis got a spec and a honker.

Lots of snipe still. Woody and I got two species on the way out of the marsh.

Ovenbird

Jan 7, 1879

Continuing hard wind all day but shifted from East to Southwest. In any event, it kept the fish down under it but up some about 4 or 5 PM. Saw for the first time in this large body of water some of the longfin tailed in shallow water. But they are sporadic as well, and a lot angrier than generally between a row. Woody had a couple of strikes from longfin but failed to get a hook-up. I just scared the one I went after.

According to Gregorio this is the fifth consecutive day of wind. Previously, one blow in the morning, the day there have been some days one after another, and some fishing. In Saturday was here in two weeks and was in fishing. The prognosis now is for a moderate let-up in the wind and (hopefully!) a gradual improvement in the fishing. For the two days have been a bust.

The second white ibis today - some saying the corner of a cage. Other says there are three somewhere in this stretch, but we haven't seen one. Both the birds are angry on the water in response, with a type of call from the boat. She has been from that and is actually moving.

Angrier than we think she is but not in that way, have no big questions. David's wife has a mackerel about half grown. He caught it up, he says, and makes her that chicken in mole for dinner - delicious!

Green Lake

Jan 5, 1979

The big wind was gone this morning and we went forth with great expectations. In the clear water we could see Comstock - white & then in the distance and beyond. But they were not feeding and swimming. Since they fly freely, they did not get a better look. But in the second bay we did see the birds but not very many. Mostly around the shore of the Dungeness at the bottom. But not many were feeding or showing interest in food.

After lunch we went to the other bay. But by 3:30 and fishing became impossible. Dark rain clouds gathered and we found time just before the rain began.

Saw two big nests of ducks today on one group of 100 or so. Two (one winged) swimmers) and another bunch of 10 to 15. They were both of a different species. Both had ring-necks. Both birds came out of a pen in the neighborhood of our house between the two.

Visited the spring nests on the north bay and saw a few pictures of the ducks. The ducks were very tame and happy with the eggs.

Saw at least a dozen big ducks today. One was a 5 ft long and several big swimmers. The size of my leg. They were released from the 5th (yellow) lake the day.

Boca Raton

Jan. 9, 1979

The heavy north wind that started yesterday was blowing full blast today. Gregorio took me to the Boca but even there it was nearly impossible to walk and there was no sign of any fish coming out to feed. So we returned to the house in mid-morning and I set up an arrangement I took Betty to Naples to the Noyan mine and taken after lunch. Betty didn't come with me but returned to the Boca and got a fine 5 pound (21") Conger. So his afternoon was made.

We set out for Fulham in a Volvare bus and arrived in a little over half an hour. There is quite a number set up around the parking lot beginning the rain. We paid our 10 pesos a piece and passed through a narrow walkway to come to a big open court of rough stone with an impressive array of buildings in the distance. The court. The major edifice is "the Castle" situated on the east edge of the court and facing out over the sea. Pigeons and I climbed the steep stairs up to the top and had a fine view of the Yucatan peninsula and the Caribbean. After an hour or so the girls moved out to the backplace where they brought Portulaca and fish.

On the trip in we saw a big coral snake. The head ahead of us. On the return a fine fluffy grey fox did the honors.

Boca Paila

Jan 11, 1979

The wind finally abated and Gregorio proposed that we go in the launch to Boca Ascension about an hour and a half from here. Off we went winding through channels in the mangroves and crossing big, open bays including the mouth of Ascension itself. When finally we reached the fishing grounds we coasted onto a little flat among low islands we could see bonfish tails in every direction. We got right to work and had a wonderful morning. At lunch time Woody and I had each landed 5 fish, all in the 18" to 20" size class. But I lost a line on one fish — a line borrowed last night from Cedric Lucas who arrived yesterday without rods (lost en route). I loaned him my #7 Fenwick graphite and borrowed a floating line from him. But my reel burst some way and fish and line disappeared into the Caribbean. We hunted long and hard without success.

After lunch the bonfish returned. About 4:00 p.m. we each got one more, making a dozen for the day. Woody also cast to various barracudas that showed themselves chasing mullet as he caught one about 3 ft. long. Missed a strike on a monster as big as you say.

Had fun visiting various bird colonies — one of frigate birds, a big roost of ibis, Roseate spoonbills, cormorants, brown pelicans, and a group of about 60 flamingos.

Boca Raton

Jan 12, 1979

First fishing day, and we left camp early (7:45 AM) for Ascension Bay. Arrived on same grounds where we started yesterday but found very little bonaparte activity. Conditions of water and calm sea seemed perfect, but no fish. Up to about noon I hadn't caught a fish and was pretty discouraged. Then rather abruptly the fish where we were cruising started with tails. Some individuals were obviously bigger and these were generally cruising alone or with one other companion. I hooked three of these "solitarians" and landed two of them, of 22 1/2" and 23 1/2" inches - much the biggest fish I had seen. The latter fought for over 35 minutes and at one time had nearly all my backing out (150 yds). Cedric Lucas and his wife Joanne stopped by for the landing and took some photos.

After a late lunch we looked around and all the tails had disappeared. The tide lasted about two hours. We went then to the string of islands in the middle of the Bay and I caught two more bonaparte, medium size. Woody ended the day with six - nothing unusually large.

We went home early to pack and pay our bill with Xavier Gonzales. He was too early for the assembly of nesting birds but had a nice look at the flamboyants.

Home to California early January 13.

25-w teal

Sorenson's

Jan 17, 1979

After some 7 inches of rain in the last two weeks the country is soggy. There were threats of flooding in the by-pass but so far this has not happened. Ducks are widely scattered however, and many doubtless are ganged up in the Sutter By-pass where there is some flooding of rice stubbles.

This morning broke clear and calm. There were no birds on the pond and for all practical purposes none came. At #5 I shot twice at teal and scored each time. Neither Ted in #4 or Woody in #2 fired a shell. The only birds that came near our pond were a few teal (including several cinnamon teal), some shovellers, and an occasional sore-ass spig. Two big flocks of canvasbacks passed up the valley and there were lots of geese in the air all morning, mostly honkers and spears, a few snows. They stayed high and showed no interest in the nearby corn stubbles. Several bunches of swans. Woody saw two jacksnipe, I saw one.

In adjoining ponds there were a few shovellers, teal and spigs killed but nothing much. We have to face the fact that our duck season is essentially over.

Saw only 15 kestrels on the road out. Rain must have scattered them.

120000 pheasant

Sorenson's

Jan 20, 1979

Last week-end of the duck season. There were no ducks but we did pick up the last of the decoys and cleared the blinds of stools and floor boards. There has been some flooding of by-pass areas with of us and I suppose that's where the ducks are hanging out.

Among the flocks passing high overhead were three bunches of canvasbacks - 15 to 20 each. Above at our level there were a surprising number of common teal - mostly males, in little groups of two or three, or singles. I wonder if they are already coming back from the southland, preparatory to nesting? We haven't seen this many all season.

Coming in on Friday afternoon we only found 15 kestrels and we were looking hard. I still think that hard rains like we had in early January drove them to the shelter of the foothills. Perhaps they are filtering back, however, for we counted 21 going out Saturday.

Found lots of pheasants on Baker. Woody and I didn't stay long but Klemmer and Cox with guests got 20 some birds.

Motor trip, Berkeley to Las Cruces, N.M.

Feb 28, to March 3, 1979

We recorded birds and mammals seen along the highway and I was astonished at the paucity of vertebrates seen in the San Joaquin, Itochapi, Thojave Desert sector.

Ravens, blackbirds, horned larks, a rare hare killed on the road, ducks & coots on a pond or two. Only one red-tailed hawk. However, starting about 10 miles west of Aguila we got into much more life - 10 kestrels in just a few miles, a couple of red-tails, several rabbit tracks. Big groups of mourning doves were evident wherever there was cultivated land, irrespective of crop (cotton, alfalfa, grain etc).

When we reached Las Cruces Sanford Schenck showed us our apartment in the Puerta del Sol complex, 505 Gregg Ave. A juncal tree back of our building there are many boat-tailed grackles, some mourning doves and a few white-winged doves - one male of which coos enthusiastically morning or evening. Have not heard the mourning doves cooing. Subsequently we have seen flickers, English sparrows, Audubon warblers and of course European rock doves.

Spent the week end organizing our apartment and laying in groceries. Took a drive through the NMSU campus and explored the town of Las Cruces.

Sacramento Mtn. near Sun Spot, E of Alamo Lake NM

March 6, 1979

Spent the whole day on a field trip in the Sacramento Mtn. where Ken Jones is about to undertake a wild Turkey study. On the way over we saw two groups of antelope (3 and 1) in the Sulzrova Basin near White Sands Nat. Monument. In Alamo Lake met Lou Wolterring USFS wildlife biologist attached to the Lincoln Nat. For. On the mountain we happened to encounter Alan Sutcliffe of NM Game & Fish who is preparing to trap and collar turkeys. Drove down a muddy road to baited trap sites and saw three bunches of turkeys, all hanging around deep areas in valley that are clear of snow. Upper slopes are heavy in snow. Two turkey flocks ^(3, 18) were heard (with 1-headed gobblers), the third was 9 big gobblers. They are not gobbling yet but probably will break up soon when the snow melts. No deer or elk this high in the mtn. (8000'+) — They winter at lower elevations than the turkeys. Many Steller jays and juncos robbing turkey bait (boiled oats + corn). Vegetation is rather dense, young pine/white fir — very little oak this high (S slopes only). Would not appear to me to be good turkey range but they apparently are quite numerous.

En route home we cruised White Sands National Monument and nibbled some of the "sand" (gyssum). Two ponds full of ducks — widson, gadwall, shoveler mostly.

Las Cruces, N.M., to Chihuahua City

Mar. 14, 1979

Left at 7:30 AM in University car with Sandy Scherminetz, his son Steve, and Phil Zwanke (Wildlife Extension Specialist). In El Paso we picked up Raul Valdez and Jose Treviño who has been surveying antelope population in Chihuahua. Had lunch along the road. Then stopped just south of El Sueco where there is a herd of about 26 antelope. This grassy playon (on E side of Highway) is about 25 miles NE of Sierra del Nido.

We spent over an hour walking across the playon studying area with field glasses, but we failed to see the berrendos. Found tracks and fresh droppings no more than half mile from the highway. Flushed a covey of 15± scaled quail in the tall grass. They flew 200 yds. and stuck in the grass, where we put them out once again. Found lots of roost spots - tails together in little open bare spots, like bobwhites. Big flocks of jipitz and scattered savannah sparrows.

Asked Jose Treviño about grizzlies. He reports that some guy says he saw two (together) a little S of Cerro Campana, adjoining Sierra del Nido on the south. They were allegedly "cinnamon brown", hence were reported as grizzlies. Might just as well be black bears.

Stayed at Victoria Hotel in central Chihuahua. Took Jose and his charming wife to dinner.

Babícora waterfowl area

Village Nicolás Bravo, 150 (?) mi NW of Chihuahua.

Mar. 15, 1979

James Wm. P. Hunt ranch

Drove west and then north of Chihuahua, passing through the big Mennonite colony that lies SW of Sierra del Nido. Bought some of their distinctive cheese (like cottage cheese consolidated) and some rolls and beer. Had lunch along the road under a live-oak grove. A vermilion flycatcher ♀ was catching bugs around our lunch site. Lots of mourning doves and some *Aphelocoma* jays.

Arrived at Nicolás Bravo (a few mi. S of Gómez Farías) and picked up Enrique Domínguez as a guide. Left the Chev and all piled into Jose's little safari car, top down. Drove as far as we could out across the enormous flats of Babícora, then scattered and walked. Absolutely no emergent cover, all grazed to the ground. Shallow sloughs meandering over the grassland. Most of the waterfowl that winter here have left. Enrique says there were 2000 sandhill cranes here recently but now only their tracks are left. One bunch of 300 snow geese. Several thousand ducks, mostly shovellers, gadwall, and green-winged teal, but at least 100 Mexican ducks and 100 or more Mallards. The latter surprised me. A golden eagle made a magnificent stoop on a flock of flying ducks and came within inches of catching a big shrike gadwall. But the ducks could turn to the right faster than the eagle and eluded him. Also saw a bald eagle. Few sprigs, ruddys, and canvasbacks.

Babicora (cont.)

Mar 15, 1979. He returned to the village late afternoon and had coffee with Dominguez and his wife and son Manuel. Continued on to village of Buenaventura for supper. Then drove 20 mi. or so to the ranch of a friend of Jose where he spent the night.

Rancho Ojo Caliente - Ernesto Peal, ranchero

Mar. 16, 1979

The present rancho of 21,000 hectares is a remnant of one of the great old haciendas of Chihuahua (originally 250,000 hectares). The Peal family acquired the property fairly recently. The main hacienda building is an enormous one story adobe house with countless rooms (all big), all floors tiled, but the place now in shabby repair. I was alone in a bedroom with three Simmons beds, but one window missing, venetian blinds both busted, no electricity. In the morning we cooked our own breakfast since the cook was on vacation. Some vaqueros also made their own breakfast in the big kitchen.

After breakfast we walked around the grounds for an hour or so. There is an elegant hot spring in the yard, boxed into a concrete pool from which it overflows and runs across the country for half a mile. Water is potable and is pumped up to a tank, from which pipes serve all the buildings of the rancho.

Rancho Ojo Caliente; El Sueno

Mar 16, 1979 (cont) The original hacienda building and the chapel date back to late 1800's. The big house we were in was built about 1940.

Mr. Peal showed up before we left. He runs about 1500 cattle (too many, judging from the range). Says there are a fair number of white-tailed deer in rugged back areas of the ranch. No javali, turkeys, wolver, or lions. One of the ranch hands pulled a fresh ham of venison out of the ice box, to the embarrassment of Jose.

He found tracks of scaled quail at the water hole and Peal says there are lots of them on the ranch. Mexican quail are found on the pine/oak higher areas.

Wolver are said to survive on the Sierra de los Lunas 20 miles S of here, which would be close to the Sierra del Nido.

Mourning doves are abundant. White-wings very rare.

We left the Rancho about 10:00 AM drove to El Sueno back on Pan-American Highway, bought beer and burritos for lunch, and drove out on the ranch where the antelope live. Cruised for several hours but saw only one fine buck - very wild. We couldn't get closer than 600 yds in the safari car.

Returned to the highway, said good-bye to Jose, who drove south to home in Chihuahua. We turned north and reached Las Cruces in time for supper.

Caballo Reservoir on Rio Grande, 60+ mi. above Los Cruces, N.M.

March 25, 1979

Betty and I drove up the Rio Grande for a Sunday picnic. Took the river road (#85) that follows close to the channel, now completely diked on both sides. River is running high now with snowmelt, but well within its banks. At Los Cruces color of water is hot chocolate. Gets gradually clearer as you go up toward dam. Water in Caballo Reservoir is not clear by any means but it would be fishable - sort of gray-blue.

Along river banks inside dikes are some impenetrable thickets of salt cedar. According to Ralph Ritt and some of the entomologists & botanists in Biology Dept. these thickets are sterile - little vertebrate life, few insects (other than mosquitoes). Some other areas support healthy stands of greasewood (Atriplex canescens), especially in the mouths of tributary draws. There are good habitats for Gambel quail but now most of them are close to houses (mobile homes, etc.) or are posted. Ralph says it is hard to find places to hunt.

Caballo Reservoir is rimmed with a sterile beach of sand or clay, no vegetation around the border. We picnicked on a high point above an active and noisy marina. Motor boats roaring about. Only one fishing boat that I could see. It was drift trolling.

Saw white birds some miles up reservoir that I took to be pelicans. A few shags and gulls about

Campus, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces

March 27, 1979

Ralph Raitt and I emerged from the Biology Bldg. at 5:10 PM (I had just presented a seminar) when we saw a Cooper Hawk carrying a bird duck around a corner of a building. We followed and found the hawk perched near the top of a tall cypress tree, in plain sight. The bird was in his claw, one open wing drooped down. He milled about on the ground trying to identify the prey. Finally he shifted position and dropped the bird which proved to be a common pigeon (rock dove) with its head and about a third of the body already eaten. He tossed it on the lawn where the hawk could see it if he was still hungry.

That evening one of the graduate students in Biology told us that he had seen virtually the same scene a year ago — Cooper Hawk with a pigeon.

White-winged doves were cooing on the roof of the Engineering Building.

Mar. 28, 1979

On several recent occasions I have watched groups of female boat-tailed grackles foraging on lawns. They work along in tandem, a few feet apart, and are constantly alert to where the other birds in the group are headed. I couldn't see any of them actually catch anything but they were sure looking. On one occasion a bird picked up a long limber piece of dead grass and flew away. Instantly all the other birds flew after it.

Gila National Forest

March 31, 1979

Sandy Schemnitz^{and son Stu} took me for an all day cruise of the Gila. We set out at 6 AM for Silver City. Saw two coyotes trotting along together about 10 mi. ^{East} ~~West~~ of Heming (along Highway 10) and a roadrunner 10 mi. NW of Heming along Highway 180. This is the first roadrunner I have seen. Six antelope were bedded down on an open grassy hill just west of Hurley (Kennecott Copper mine ad smelter).

At Fort Bayard we met Larry Temple, research biologist for NM Game & Fish Dept. He took us on a tour of his study area of 16 square miles - the Fort Bayard tract now operated by the Forest Service. This area has had no grazing for several decades and is magnificent. Mostly piñon juniper with fine stands of blue grama (and in some areas side oate grama) on openings. There were parks along streams with big cottonwoods and other hardwoods. Saw "the worlds largest alligator juniper" - dbh about 5 feet. Mountain mahogany everywhere, showing browse but not excessive. Also lots of grey oak, some gambel oak.

The area carries a lot of game - elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer (along bottoms), javalina, and wild turkey. Gambel quail and meadow quail locally. We saw a band of about a dozen elk (no recognizable bulls but their antlers are shed now) and three mule deer, one of which was a fine 4 point buck still carrying antlers.

Bila

Mar 31, 1979 (cont.) I was surprised to see antlers so late. Larry says they will soon fall.

They have 80 some odd deer carrying radio collars and Larry took us to the receiving station on top of a high hill and showed us how the recorder works. He hooked up his receiver and set dials to check individual animals using the directional antenna and ear phones where necessary to get a clear signal. If the deer dies the transmitter starts giving rapid beeps. They check every deer twice a day and go immediately to dead ones to record the cause of death (lion, coyote, dog etc.) and to recover the collar.

Also he has a few collars on elk. A crew is coming tomorrow (23 men) to man a net and catch a bunch more elk, mule deer, and some white-tailed deer for collars. Larry flies a helicopter and drives the animals into the net. Many men jump on them. OK for deer but holding down elk must be dangerous as hell.

They also have two lions collared and have 30 or 35 readings on each.

I am greatly impressed with Larry and with this whole operation. But the Forest Service is planning to put cattle on parts of this area "to measure the effect on wildlife". With 95 percent of the country grazed you might think it worthwhile to keep a bit of it ungrazed.

Gila

Mar 31, 1979

We left Fort Bayard and drove up to Gila Hot Springs where we visited with Isabel Campbell who runs the general store there. Terrible floods in November and December have torn the Gila River bottoms into shreds and left great bars of sand and gravel. This watershed is wilderness mostly ungrazed, so you can't blame the flood on cows. A hand-painted portrait of Brad hangs over the door.

A mile or so up the river we visited Frank Smith, lion hunter for Fish & Game Dept. He is a tall, quiet unassuming man whose adventures chasing after his pack on a lion trail match Elliot Barker's. One recent event intrigued me. After cold trailing several hours his dogs jumped the lion off a fresh kill. Chase went over a hill and Smith & companion followed in leisurely fashion, sure the cat would soon be treed. But when they topped the hill they couldn't hear a thing! After several hours searching he returned to the deer hill, dismounted, and tracked his own dogs afoot. He soon found the tracks all entering an old mine shaft. Crawling on his belly he entered and proceeded with a cigarette lighter for his light. He found one dog whimpering there, took it out and returned. Gropping along he found a hole in the floor - a vertical shaft some 4 ft across. Far below he could hear dogs whining. Ahead in the main horizontal shaft he could see the eyes of the lion. He retreated and the

Gila

Mar 31, 1979 (cont.) lion followed him to the mouth. When he rolled out the lion jumped over him and took off.

Next morning he returned with friends and a lot of rope. They rigged a heavy rope 32 ft. to bottom and a young man went down hand over hand. All dogs were still alive but "pretty well stove in". One by one they were hoisted out in a sling. Under the dogs were the mummified bodies of two lions, several javelinas, and assorted rattlesnakes that had died in this trap. In time all dogs recovered. One of the friends is going back with dynamite to close the mouth of this dangerous tunnel.

After coffee with the Smiths we went up to the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument and climbed up to inspect the remains, abandoned apparently by 1200 AD.

Left the parking lot at 5 PM and started home for Las Cruces. Stopped for a bite of supper in a quaint little mom-and-pop cafe in Hillsboro. Saw three mule deer does beside the road on the way down. Very pretty views of the Black Mtn. Range as we descended.

April 10, 1974

Bozque de Apache Nat. Wildlife Refuge near Socorro N.M.

We vacated our apartment in Las Cruces (Puerta del Sol, 505 Griggs Ave., Apt. E-1) and set out up the Rio Grande to the refuge at San Antonio, just down river from Socorro. This is the area that Dad and I used to hunt in the early 1920's. The FWS has bought up about 10 miles of river bottom. Much of it is in thick cottonwood pole timber and is well populated with mule deer. We saw one group of five. Low swales and old ox-bows are diked to hold shallow ponds, some very large (50 to 100 acres). Better drained sites are farmed in alfalfa and grain for the geese and cranes.

According to the refuge personnel the cranes and geese left some weeks ago. The whooping cranes were already gone when we reached Las Cruces March 3 (Sandy Schmittz phoned.) In one alfalfa field we saw 4 pairs of hawks (do they nest here?) and elsewhere a couple of singles, surely left over cripples. On our cruise we saw perhaps 1000 ducks, most numerous being shovellers, gadwall, cinnamon and green-winged teal, and mallards. glimpsed a few New Mexico Ducks at a distance, and later saw a dozen or so more in a flooded pasture toward Socorro. Scattered individuals of the following: blue-winged teal, ring-neck, redhead, lesser scaup, widgeon. A big flock of yellow-headed blackbirds, along with red-wings.

There have been some tremendous fires in the bozque, giving rise to dog-hair thickets of cottonwood and willow — not particularly attractive except perhaps to deer.

Went to a motel in Socorro for the night.

Belen and Tome, N.M.

April 11, 1979

We moved to a motel in Belen, and I spent the afternoon exploring the old hunting grounds around Tome where Dad and Ward Shepard had a lease on a small duck pond with an adobe house nearby. Found a road that paralleled the acequia skirting the base of Tome hill on the west. This is precisely where we did our quail hunting. At that time the foothill area was severely overgrazed and Dad built little exclosure fences around "chamisa bushes" (Atriplex canescens) to restore spots of cover — the genesis of his ideas about game management! Now it would appear that grazing is much reduced, for the atriplex thickets at the base of the hill are in fine shape for quail occupancy. I didn't go out searching for scaled quail but I am sure they are there.

The old duck pond is gone and the square field where it was situated now supports a healthy stand of alfalfa. In fact nearly all of the flat land hereabouts is in alfalfa or other crops, irrigated from the acequia at the upper edge. There are quite a few occupied homes now along the foothills bordering the acequia, so I couldn't locate the old adobe house that we rented. It has probably been torn down, or weathered away in the ensuing half-century.

That night we had a family reunion (17 cousins and in-laws) at Uncle Eduardo's old home in Las Lunas, now run as a very fancy steak-and-lobster restaurant. The walls are heavily decorated with photos of Lunas, Otis and Bergeres. Name of the restaurant — "Luna Mansion".

Santa Fe to Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation (W of Chama)

April 13, 1979

Bergere & Dode took me to the homestead along with Phil and Joe Schulz. Bergere is subdividing about half the Los Alamos property in 10 acre tracts (projected cost \$30 to \$40,000 per lot). Most notable observation of the day was thousands of Townsend solitaires moving through the piñones. Also two big mobs of piñon jays came by, trilling in their musical way. A coyote serenaded us as we ate our picnic lunch by the "lagunita". Went home via the Schulz place in Tesuque to see Phil's convalescent golden eagles and peregrine falcon. He throws elk and deer carcasses (body cage) on his garage roof to attract magpies, that have only recently invaded as far south as Tesuque. He has tufted-eared squirrels in his yard.

April 14, 1979

Set out for the Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation with Dode and Bergere. Their daughter Katy and her husband Jerry Peters and two kids followed. We met at the Stone Lake Lodge run by the Apaches and situated on a lovely hill beside the lake. Very fancy building but virtually abandoned over Easter week-end. We checked in, paid for the night, and were served dinner (steak and quail). Then the management left for a holiday week-end (concoffee!) and only one security guard stayed to guard the place. I asked where the quail came from and the lady answered simply "Albuquerque".

The lake was still half covered with ice, open areas being around the shore lines. Several hundred ducks

Stone Lake, Jicarilla Indian Reservation

April 14, 1979 (cont.) were gathered on the open areas or sitting on the ice — Amer. mergansers, buffleheads, gadwall, cinnamon teal, mallards, and a few wigeon, redheads, and canvasbacks. Several dozen eared grebes and 100 or more coots.

Of greatest interest were a number of eagles, both bald and golden (mostly bald). At maximum there were 8 in view at once, but the lady at the hotel desk said there were 16 when the ice first opened. All the eagles were young — not a single adult of either species. We watched two ospreys fishing and saw them hit the water several times without making a strike.

April 15, 1979

Continued our duck and eagle watch around Stone Lake. Then we drove pretty well all over the reservation hoping to see some game — elk, deer, or turkeys. Saw only a coyote. Deer tracks near the Lodge and some old elk tracks, but no sign of turkeys. It turns out there was a massive die-off in a hard winter about 5 yrs. ago and turkeys have not yet recovered. There are a few in S end of the reservation, none near Stone Lake. This year the heavy snow extending into April has precluded the Jicarilla Game Commission from opening the season so I was disappointed in my intent to try for a gobbler. Couldn't get a car off the main road anyway — snow and mud.

Drove over Wolf Creek Pass in PM and on to Denver
April 16. Saw a prairie falcon en route near Pueblo.

Fort Hunter Liggett

May 21-23, 1979

I have accepted an assignment as consultant to the US Army concerning the wildlife management program at Fort Hunter Liggett. I am to report to Col. Robert D. Cremer, Jr., Director Facilities Engineering, Fort Ord. My immediate guide and contact man is Paul Hubsby, directly under Col. Cremer.

Other persons contacted:

Will Summers - Range Conservationist, Corps of Engineers in Sacramento. Range test plots in cooperation with John Menke, Davis.

Jim Langford - Range Conservationist for Hunter Liggett, formerly with Nat. Park Service

Ray Nelson - Vertebrate Field Technician, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento. Leon Hunter.

Bob Vasquez - Maintenance General Foreman, one of the old time vaqueros and cattle experts

Gerald Grieffey - ground squirrel control

Col. Bernard Ambrose - Field Commander, Fort Hunter Liggett

Don Pine - Unit Wildlife Manager CFOG

San Benito and Monterey Counties. (King City, res.)

Bruce Elliott - Monterey office CFOG - Wildlife

Mike Johnson - Monterey office CFOG - Fisheries

Hunter Liggitt (cont.)

Local hunters are objecting to 1979 proposed doe hunts - 300 permits, 150 military and 150 civilian. They want complete closure of deer hunting on the post for three years, stepped up control of coyotes and lions.

Deer population is much reduced because of about 5 years of extreme overgrazing (through the two drought years 1975 and 1976). Woody browse completely removed in most of oak grassland and riparian strips by heavy cattle use during dry season (Summer, fall). Oak and willows high-lined. Quail likewise excluded from the open country. Ground squirrels are high following overgrazing.

Now Menke is measuring percent utilization of grass, forbs, and percentage of litter left on ground. These data are completely irrelevant in explaining the paucity of game today.

The western half of the Reserve is mountainous and covered mostly with dense chaparral. As such it doesn't support much game either. Would profit greatly by some controlled burning to open the dense brush and to give some fire security. USFS has a new burning tool used from a helicopter called "flying drip torch". Will ignite chaparral even in a fog.

Hunter Liggett (cont.)

In three days of driving around the post we saw very few deer - no more than 10 or so. The total area of some 160 square miles could hardly hold more than a few thousand deer now.

We did see a coyote, two bobcats, two golden eagles, and hundreds of ground squirrels.

There are 15 or so reservoirs on the post, some of them very large. Paul Klubsky and staff have put up a lot of wood duck boxes with considerable success. He saw a hen with 9 young (10 days + old) and a mallard hen with 4. American mergansers breed here in small numbers, and cinnamon teal abundantly. Gerald Griffey has seen two broods of quail chicks already. He saw lots of pairs but no young.

As we drove toward King City Tuesday late afternoon a golden eagle swooped toward the car and picked up a dead ground squirrel off the road without alighting - a beautiful swoop and grab, and he kept going.

Heard mountain quail calling in a canyon high on the divide looking down toward the ocean.

Wednesday afternoon visited Bruce Elliott and Mike Johnson in the Monterey office of Fish & Game.

Home by dinner time.

Sagehen Creek Field Station

June 8, 1979

Billy and I arrived mid afternoon. The hummingbirds were immediately seen patrolling the spot where I hang their feeder. I don't know if they hang around here every day or whether perhaps the activity of our arrival brought them. I had sugar water in the feeder before dark and several birds got a taste of it for dessert by bed-time.

Beavers have built several new dams in the vicinity of our camp — the closest one around the bend just below the outhouse. Heavy use on the willows already.

I fished for half an hour at dusk but there was no action at all.

June 9, 1979

Went to town to get a tank of gas (my license is odd so I couldn't fill yesterday). Also some groceries and Mucilin for dry flies.

Split wood for a while from the new logs Vernon had cut for me last fall from dead lodgepole pines behind our cabin. Also went into the meadow and cut young lodgepoles that are springing up all over the place. Must have cut close to 100, from 1 to 7 ft. tall. The meadow would soon disappear if you left it.

At daylight there were two deer in the meadow, a doe and a nice sleek buck with velvet knobs indicating several points.

Sagehen

June 10, 1979

Went fishing 10 AM till noon to see if maybe the rise would show with the sun. No such luck — I didn't see a single fish rise. But I brought up some little fellows to a dry fly and kept five — 7 to 10", rainbow & brook.

After a long nap we worked on Betty's doll house bit. It took half the afternoon to read and understand the directions.

Among the hummingbirds we see some male calliopes every day, but no male reynolds. We are several weeks earlier this year than usual. Maybe that explains the presence of males which normally are gone by late June.

A red-breasted sapsucker has a nest hole in the "spires" across the creek, where flickers lived last year. An olive-sided flycatcher also decorates the spires.

Abundant sign of microtus along the streamside dry meadows — must have been a peak year. I opened one nest and it had been occupied by a weasel.

June 11, 1979

Cut wood, built furniture for Betty's miniature country store, and otherwise frittered the day away. Located the robin nest NE of the camp beside the road — four gawking youngsters stick their heads up each time a parent arrives.

Worked on Saxe's retrieving — perhaps a little better than it used to be.

Sagehen

June 12, 1979

Visited Vernon at the Station for an hour or so in the morning, talking Station business. Bob Means dropped by while we were visiting. I saw the pine marten on the roof of the "Captain's Cabin" as he entered a hole through the shingles that he created. Vernon went inside and as I waited outside he popped out the hole, ran down a tree, and made his way leisurely out to the road and on up the hill. A beautiful sleek animal, larger and fluffier than I would have remembered.

Nancy fed us a beautiful dinner, as she always does.

June 13, 1979

I drove to Town for groceries. Saw a marmot on the road going out, and several golden-mantled squirrels. Evidence on Highway 89 where several deer have been killed by automobiles.

Saw another deer across the creek mid-morning. I think it was a doe.

Scattered some bird seed about the yard and immediately had action among the chipmunks. Also our clientele of hummingbirds continues to increase - sometimes a dozen or so in the vicinity, with much chasing and mock battle. The male calliope is not a dominant figure - he often is chased by females.

Sagehen

June 14, 1979

Tried the fishing again today with virtually no action - 10 to 12 AM at Rockslide, 4 to 5 PM here at our camp. Took one nice little 10" brownie and a smaller rainbow. No hatch all day that I could see, and correspondingly no rise. Several fair sized fish came up to the fly and bumped it, obviously not trying to feed.

At the Rockslide I saw tracks of a bobcat, a raccoon, and a muskrat. Beaver dams one behind the next, to the point where there is little running water left to fish.

Around camp where I am throwing bird seed we had six chipmunks in sight at once. Chickarees are almost always in evidence - chasing each other back and forth across the creek or carrying lodgepole cones to cache. I never recall seeing so many chickarees here.

San Francisco Flycasting Club, Truckee River

June 15, 1979

Ed Landels invited me to have dinner and an evening of fishing at the club near Boca. We ate at 2 PM, had a nice long nap, and were on the river from about 5 PM to 8:30 PM.

Rise started at 6 PM and continued in a desultory, off-and-on manner until dark. Ed and I each caught about 10 fish, mine went from 9" to 16½", about half rainbow, half brownies.

San Francisco Flycasting Club (cont.) Ed used deer hair "humpy" flies exclusively. I shifted from humpies to royal wulff. I kept four ester-size fish around 10", put the rest back.

A good many night hawks flying about the river here as well as kingfishers, spotted sandpipers, Brewer blackbirds. Driving home to Sogchen in the night I saw five deer.

Sogchen

June 16, 1979

Dedication ceremony of the rebuilt water diversion structure. About 25 people from San Fran. Casting Club were here — they raised half the money for this job. Fine steak barbecue and Ron Eiman talk in evening about research at the Station. Dennis Seegarden represented the Society Flyst.

June 17, 1979

Betty and I had the Seegardens for sourdough breakfast. Three inches of SNOW on the ground, and it kept snowing off and on during the day. Seegardens and all other guests left early to get over the pass.

June 18, 1979

Betty and I broke camp and were on our way home by 10:00 AM.

Madison Fork Ranch, West Yellowstone

June 23, 1979

Carl and I flew into West Yellowstone yesterday, did some shopping (booze, etc.), got fishing licenses, and spent night in a motel.

This morning after an early breakfast we drove to the Ranch and were settled into the fancy new cabin on the hill overlooking the ranch pasture. He spent an hour or more arranging our gear, another hour practicing knots for leaders, flies etc. Then went to the Pond for casting lesson. Found a lot of Canada goose droppings on the levee but didn't see the geese. After the casting we dropped down to the river and had a go at the rainbow. Peri seemed to be about over by the time we got there. I caught one ten-incher.

After lunch and a nap we drove up river about half a mile and fished a stretch of meadow stream. I saw one big fish rise once but couldn't raise him. It turned out that Charlie (one of the guests from Texas) caught three good browns in this stretch this morning between 10 and noon.

After dinner we returned to the pond. A big hatch of Chironomid midges and some large browns were milling around near the marsh end obviously nymphing on emerging midges. I couldn't interest them in a series of flies, wet or dry. We disturbed a family of ducks → little ones very dark, probably goldeneyes (we saw ten later). Also found the pair of housewrens with four goslings.

Madison Fork Ranch (Furhole)

June 24, 1979

After breakfast we drove to the Furhole River, arriving at the "Iron bridge" about 10:15. Yesterday there was reported to have been a big hatch here 10 to 1 PM. Today there was virtually nothing - the old mayfly but not enough to induce a general rise in the trout. We caught nothing at all.

Red-winged blackbirds were feeding hell out of a pair of ravens. Every time a raven would fly, the blackbirds would alight on its back (once all three!) and peck hell out of it, forcing the raven to the ground.

Down to the lower Gilbon where we walked down from the road and enjoyed a picnic in privacy.

Within the park we saw trumpeter swans on lower Madison, elk in lots of places along Madison & Furhole, quite a herd of bison on big flats of middle Furhole. Drove up to Gilbon Meadows for a look around and saw quite a group of elk (14 or more) mostly bulls, the antlers about half grown.

Home by 3 PM for a long nap.

After dinner we returned to the Pond. Much less of a rise tonight but Carl hooked and landed a 15" brown which he kept for breakfast. The Canada geese were bothered by our fishing, and paraded across the pond to avoid us, Daddy & I first, six goslings in an evenly spaced line following him, Mommy bringing up the rear.

Heard Sandhill cranes at a great distance.

Tradition Fork Ranch (Floated Henry's Fork)

June 25, 1979

I had arranged a float trip with Barry Schaplow of Bud Lilly's Fly Shop. He called for us here at 8:15 and we drove about 60 mi to the lower Henry's Fork of the Snake, above Ashton. Floated all day, taking out at 6:00 PM at the main highway bridge where #20 crosses Henry's Fork.

The rise was continuous all day — never a dull period. We caught somewhere around 30 to 40 rainbows apiece, many of them 10 to 15 inches. Hooked a couple of bigger ones but didn't land them. I caught one brown trout of 10" or so which seemed to surprise Barry — it appears there have been releases of browns in recent years but no sign of a real "take" as yet. Carl caught two whitefish — that was all. A few of the rainbows showed strong traces of cutthroat lineage. Beautiful dry fly water — lots of nice riffles and pockets along the edge of the stream. Very little slack water or unfishable shallows.

Ospreys followed us along the stream all day and we saw one dive into a rather tumultuous rapid and emerge with a trout. Saw several female mergansers (which I take to be American) and one female with a very lively brood of third-grown young. Occasional hen mallards flew up or down the river. Added a dozen bird species to our list, including Eastern screech owl, magpie, horned owl (flew across the canyon at noon), dipper, etc.

Near Henry's Lake saw antelope and quite a few cranes in flocks of a dozen or so — non-breeding yearlings?

Madison Fork Ranch

June 26, 1975

Today we stayed on the home ranch and went after the wild brown trout. These fish in South Fork of the Madison are highly sophisticated and touchy about taking a dry fly. Most of the time they lie safely under a cut bank and keep out of trouble. Only now and then is there a good rise with lots of fish feeding.

Today there was a desultory rise in the morning with an occasional fish coming up to feed. Carl hooked a nice brownie but lost him about noon. After lunch and a nap I located a rising fish about half mile up the river and hooked and landed him — 17 inches in fairly good condition. Didn't have the camera to do his portrait. He went out to the Pond after supper but didn't hook a fish. Light rise.

Several pairs of sandhill cranes apparently are nesting in the big meadow upstream. From time to time during the day they blast forth and fill the valley with stirring calls. Also we are hearing wailing jacksnipe somewhere up creek. We see mallards frequently — mostly hens, presumably with nests or broods. Last evening a group of seven came over high and I would suppose they were drakes gathering for molting.

Forgot to say, yesterday about 7:15 PM we noted our little female junco whose nest is just below our porch, bouncing about in the grass. Turned out she was fighting off a mole that was headed toward the nest. Carl went down and encouraged the mole to keep going, away from the nest.

Madison Fork Ranch

June 27, 1979

Although the rise was spotty and of short duration, this turned out to be our most triumphant fishing day. In the morning between 11:00 and 12:00 noon we saw several fish rising persistently, and Carl and I each landed one, $17\frac{1}{2}$ and 17 ". Mine (the larger) was particularly deep bodied and gave the appearance of being larger than it was — I guessed 18 to 19" when it came to net. But the little tape measure never lies. The sun was bright on the water but somehow we fooled these two without spooking them with shadows of line and leader.

After lunch we went to town for a few supplies. Returned in heavy overcast sky with lightning and thunder to the east. So we went right out on the stream, near the upper cluster of cabins. To our disappointment there was no general rise. But I took a smaller brownie ($13\frac{3}{4}$ ") that was rising occasionally, and Carl caught a very large whitefish ($16\frac{1}{2}$ ") on a small dry fly. He fought as well as a brown trout of equivalent size — perhaps even better.

All day today the jacksnipe were putting on a magnificent show of "winnowing" and nuptial flights. At the end of a sequence of high level maneuvers the male would just hold his wings straight up and come plummeting downward to earth, catching himself just above the grass. Lots of action too among the sandhill cranes. Cliff swallows are nesting in the old buildings. Tree swallows here too but I don't know where their nests are.

Played guitar and sang with the group this evening.

Madison Fork Ranch

June 28, 1979

Today we took our lunch and went far upstream to the beaver dam on Forest Service land, a mile outside this property. There was some action when we first hit the stream about 10:00 AM but it didn't last long. Carl hooked but lost a fine brownie near the upper cabin just as he got started.

The fish was trying to get under a cut bank and Carl apparently hoisted him a little too hard. I had a good solid strike from a big brownie and jerked the damn fly right out of his mouth. The total rise was short and casual, and through mid-day there was nothing coming to the top at all.

After a nice creek-bank lunch and a long nap in the hot sun, we started on upstream, arriving at the big beaver dam. Carl found a deep run above the dam, representing an original stream channel and he started bringing out fat brownies. Kept two for breakfast (16" and 12") and brought them down stream to show me! I was delighted, of course.

We fished on through the afternoon with no more action so we went home for a refreshing shower, and some refreshing booze, before dinner. It turned out that Maggie had a passel of her New York friends for dinner (including her doctor) and the meal was a bit stuffy from our viewpoint.

Carl sneaked off from the dinner group and went "fishing" at the Pond. No action at all, he reports. When I had the chance to get away I went home and read Frank Craighead's "Trick of the Grizzly".

Madison Fork Ranch

June 25, 1979

Yesterday was so much fun that Carl proposed we return to the upper stream with another lunch. He set out early this time, and at 9:15 found a good active rise. Started right in catching good sized brownies, and the action continued at a slowing pace until noon. Just before lunch time I hooked a fine big fish (18") right by our camp site, and he started jumping like crazy. My yells and curses brought Carl on the double, and he arrived to observe the last big jumps. Landed his nibs and after appropriate portraits we turned him loose and laid on lunch, this time with wine to celebrate.

In all, I took 8 fish today, including the following: brownie of 18", 17, 16½, 15, and a rainbow of 14". Carl caught 8 fish also, nearly all brownies including several 15 to 17". He also took a 16" whitefish. In the past week Carl has caught several whitefish and I haven't caught a one! This was far and away the best day we have had on South Fork.

On the way back to the car I jumped a goshawk off a log in the forest, no sign of a bull, however. To our bird list we also added green-winged teal and Canada jay (a pair at the cabin where we parked). Jockmipe and sandhill cranes kept us entertained much of the morning. A thin overcast of clouds may well have contributed to the success of our fishing.

Came home at 4PM and after two beers apiece we took a nice nap before cocktail hour.

Madison Fork Ranch

June 29, 1979 (cont.)

Again this evening Carl sneaked off from the dinner table to fish the Pond. And this time he hit the jackpot. On a muddler minnow he took first a 13" brookie, which made him very happy because it represented breakfast (I had saved the 14" rainbow for my breakfast). He then continued to cast and next hooked a 15" brown which apparently did a lot of jumping before he was subdued and landed. In the meantime even in the pitch dark he could see and hear other big fish wallowing about. The third one he hooked was apparently a monster, and kept Carl busy till almost midnight. I was reading and awaiting his return, and began to get a bit uneasy, although I was sure a big fish was the cause of his tardiness. Carl had forgotten his net, and when it came to besching the big boy the hook pulled out and the fish escaped. But the adventure was enjoyed by all.

June 30, 1979

We packed our gear after breakfast and said good-bye to Maggie, Marilyn and the girls. Stopped at Bud Lilly's to see Barry, but he was floating. Carl bought a reel, line, and some leader material - a new trout fisherman ready to give 'em hell.

Carl flew off to Denver, I caught a later plane to Salt Lake and home.

BIRD LIST

Madison Fork Ranch - June 23-28, 1979

Great blue heron	Raven
Trumpeter swan	Magpie
Canada goose	Canada jay
Mallard	Clark's nutcracker
Cinnamon teal	Chickadee
Green-wing teal	House wren
Golden-eye	Robin
American merganser	Mountain bluebird
Goshawk	Eastern catbird
Red-tailed hawk	
Osprey	Water Ouzel
Kestrel	Cedar waxwing
Sandhill crane	Starling
Sora rail	Audubon warbler
Killdeer	Orange-crowned warbler
Spotted sandpiper	Yellow warbler
Jacksnipe	Yellowthroat
Phalarope	Red-winged blackbird
Mourning dove	Brewer blackbird
Horned owl	Yellow-headed blackbird
Night-hawk	Cowbird
Kingfisher	Western tanager
Hairy woodpecker	Green-tailed towhee
Flicker	Red crossbill
Yellow-bellied sapsucker	Cassin finch
Barn swallow	Goldfinch
Cliff swallow	Lazuli-bunting
Tree swallow	Oregon junco

Pine siskin

Chipping sparrow

White-crowned sparrow

Savanna sparrow

Song sparrow

Flowering plants - Madison Fork Ranch June 23-28, 1979

Cinquefoil

Sugarbowl

Field chickweed

White Phlox

Draba

Penstemon

Woolly yellow daisy

Bluebonnet

Larkspur

W. fringed gentian

Yellow monkeyflower

Elephanthead

Fernleaf

False hellebore

Blue-eyed grass

American bistort

Geranium

Green gentian

Pussytoes

Locoweed

Paintbrush

Arnica

Bog Orchid

Umbrella plant

Potentilla gracilis

Clematis hirsutissima

Cerastium arvense

Phlox multiflora

Draba reptans (?)

Penstemon procerus (?)

Eriphyllum lanatum

Lupinus sericeus

Dalphinium velsoni

Gentiana thermalis

Mimulus guttatus

Pedicularis groenlandica

P. bracteosa

Veratrum viride

Sisyrinchium sarmunthosum

Polygonum bistortoides

Geranium richardsonii

Grassera speciosa

Antennaria rosea

Smilacina racemosa

Astragalus purshii

Castilleja miniata

Arnica cordifolia

Habenaria

Eriogonum

San Felipe Ranch of Hewlett-Pachard
Santa Clara County

August 24-26, 1979

I arrived for the annual deer chasing festival at 3 PM and found The Livermore sipping a beer in the shade. Hunters kept arriving until our full quota of 12 was on hand. We set out for the evening hunt in four jeeps, and when we returned at dark there was only one buck taken - a little fork that lived in the pasture by the barn. It is abundantly clear that the two drought years, when virtually no fawns were raised, have caused a substantial drop in the deer population. In our jeep we saw 28 deer on Henderson Ridge; in recent years on the same hunt we would have seen 100 to 150 deer, including 25 to 40 legal bucks. Of the 28, two were legal bucks.

Our Hunter Liggett Bruce Elliot reports that of the first 50± bucks killed, one was a yearling, something like 4 were two-year olds, and the rest were big mature animals.

Now the hunting was considerably tougher than we are accustomed to. He did much more brush-beating afoot. One by one we got deer until finally we ended up with nine, of which two were old heavy bucks, several were three year olds and four or five were two year old forks. No-one got two - but 9 of us got one.

There came on the Saturday afternoon hunt with Thorrie Hoyle and Ernie Arbuckle. I took them to Horseshoe

San Felipe deer hunt (cont) and assigned each man to a ridge - mine was the middle one (no. 3). I dropped over the east edge well down in the oak and worked slowly out the ridge to the north, watching ahead and below for bedded deer. I spotted horns in the canyon bottom 100 yards below me and sneaked up behind a tree to a point where I could sit down and still see the deer to shoot. The buck had seen me by this time and was staring intently. I shot through the grass at his shoulder and cut the top (auricles) right off his head. He never moved.

Came the inevitable job of hauling him out. The three of us together had a helluva time getting him up to the jeep. He weighed 126 lbs. dressed, had heavy based antlers 2 yds. right, 3 yds. left, and his teeth were worn almost to the gums, meaning he was past his prime. I'd bet he had beautiful antlers a couple of years ago! This was the only big deer that I saw all week end, though other parties saw a number of them.

I saw three half-grown coyotes together on a grassy hillside south end of the ranch and a fine adult coyote the last morning near woodpile. A prairie falcon came over the ranch area Saturday afternoon while Bill H. was preparing to fly his box kite. Saw one golden eagle.

Gene Packard wasn't with us this year. He is in China as a guest of the Government, advising them on setting up an electronics industry.

'Bill Hamilton Ranch, Winters Calif.

Sept 1, 1979

Betty and I spent last night with Bill and Virginia Loughurst; ate a lovely dinner, played poker, and got to bed too late. Up at 5:00 am to go after the elusive mourning dove at Bill ^{Hamilton's} place (he is in Africa now).

As was the case two years ago, the dove flight at Bill's was light, whereas a mile or so to the south where there is water in the ditch the flight (and consequent bombardment) were mighty impressive. Still we got a dozen birds between us (mostly Bill's) and had a pleasant outing. Of the 12 birds, 8 were squabs, 4 adults. Main food item in crops was wheat, followed closely by bull thistle. There were a few odd small weed seeds. Bill L. also shot one quail pigeon and it had a mix of wheat and barley in its crop. One of the adult doves had traces of milk tissue in the crop.

Watched a white-tailed kite trying to harass a passing prairie falcon. The falcon didn't seem perturbed. Also saw marsh hawks and kestrels. A shooter on the next property south shot a kestrel, presumably mistaking it for a dove.

Some workmen came out to repair a fence, and within a few feet of the spot where Betty had been sitting they found three rattlesnakes. Killed one of them, two escaped.

Berkeley to Yellowstone

Sept. 17-18, 1979

Woody and I made the drive handily in two days, arriving at Mammoth at about 2:30 PM. Spent the night of Sept 17 with the Phil Jurmans at Jerome.

Saw antelope in the usual places - Dept. Energy grounds east of Rexford and near Henry's Lake. Saw 1 coyote, 1 golden eagle, a covey of Hungarian partridges near Twin Falls.

Settled into Apt I and went to bed early.

Sept 19, 1979

Arrived at Buffalo Ford at 10 AM and were on the river shortly thereafter. We waited around for the rise that never came. About 12 noon you could see an occasional fish moving and we hooked 6 and landed 3 (Woody had 2 of 15" jacks, I had 1 16" male). But there was no visible hatch of bugs and hence no response on the part of the fish.

A big bull bison appeared next to us (40 ft) as we were taking a nap and he forded the river just like the place name implies. River is very low this year - can be waded in many places. Several little groups of American mergansers came by, and one flock of 30 \pm Goldeneyes. No sign of the harlequin ducks.

Along the road we saw only one elk herd - near Appolomaville Spring, and a couple of odd cows. Big herd of bison at Hayden Valley and scattered bulls. No moose seen.

Yellowstone

Sept 20, 1979

Drove to the mouth of the Lamar, crossed it and set up camp on the Yellowstone about a mile below the junction. Water was low enough that I forded the Lamar in hip boots. I started fishing the heavy water where it bends on the bank below the junction and only caught one 10" rainbow. Woody went downstream to slower water below the bend and got into some fine action from cutthroats up to 16". He called me down and I caught a couple before lunch.

After lunch and a nap we failed to get much action where it had been abundant in the morning. We moved up to the Lamar and had a fine time in the lower two pools/runs above the mouth. Woody got into some cuts in a steel deep hole and caught four. I worked fast water in the first (lower) hole and took two nice hybrids rainbow/cut. They both hit like rainbows and fought and jumped like rainbows. I rose several others that gave the typical hard slap on top. It seems that the fish sort themselves out according to their genetic reaction to fast or slow water.

Weather continues warm and we are seeing very little wildlife. Not a single ungulate! Woody reminds me that he saw a mouse.

Yellowstone - Upper Lamar

Sept. 21, 1979

Continued Indian summer weather and we headed for the upper Lamar valley while the stream is still clear. Walked across the big meadow to discover that the section of stream where we usually start fishing is completely dry! Reasoning that the river had to be somewhere in the valley we continued south to the foot of Sentinel Ridge where we found some handsome new water running west behind the grove of cottonwoods. Here we spent a fine day with occasional action along undercut banks. I netted 8 cats between 13" and 18" and Woody got 6. Beyond that we caught and released some 10 inchers that weren't measured or counted. As we quit at 4:00 PM to make our way back across that big, big meadow the evening rise was getting underway. Could have taken more fish if we had wanted to stay.

Back at the house Frank Richardson and Gardner Grant joined us. We headed for Lamar picnic area where we cooked steaks and had a pleasant visit. Gardner's son Gary joined us too, along with a fishing guide from Iceland. Very social.

Saw several flocks of hawks and a few ducks along the river. The odd bison ball visible on the high ridges. A prairie falcon and a golden eagle cruised overhead. Bunch of 6 mule deer (1 bucks) near Smith Falls.

Yellowstone - Upper Lamar

Sept 22, 1979

Yesterday was so good here that we decided to return. Results however were entirely different. We had as many or more rises than yesterday but very few of these resulted in hook-ups. The fish were desultory and disinterested in eating. Woody netted 5, I got 3, none very big (13 to 15"). Lost several others that got us tangled in snags. The weather today seemed just like yesterday, but something surely was different.

On the way out in the morning we saw a moose cow and calf, and not far beyond a fluffy gray coyote mousing in deep grass. At the fishing area we saw several times during the day a little band of six antelope doe and young, followed at 100 yds or so by a handsome buck. Several flocks of hawks. Near the Lamar picnic area where we cooked our dinner was a band of 35 or 40 cow bison with young. They were nowhere in evidence yesterday. Most exciting event of the day was our discovery of a big male mink, hunting along the creek bank for his dinner. We both watched him slithering around under a cut bank, trying to find a trout. We've seen mink on the Lamar before, but much smaller than this fellow - presumably females.

In mud along the stream area I saw round tracks in several places that I feel sure were cat - bobcat? Lynx?

Yellowstone - mouth of the Lamar

Sept. 23, 1979

He made a dinner date for this evening with Mary Meagher and moreover he agreed to supply the fish - a risky promise. We spent the day on the Yellowstone River about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile below the mouth of the Lamar. Again we found very slow action on the part of the trout but we did come up with one limit of two fish each, all between 13 and $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Three of these were rainbows, surprisingly. Hardly a rise from a cut, whereas in this same area several days ago Woody had plenty of action from cuts, of all sizes.

We saw little game today. An occasional merganser or harlequin duck came down the river. At Mary's cabin on Blacktail Creek the coyotes serenaded us at dusk. Paul Schullery was another guest - he has recently finished a book on bears.

Mammoth Springs

Wild Front Symposium II was held Sept. 24 and 25. I participated as Moderator and Summarizer. About 190 registered participants came from all over the country to the fest. Transactions will be printed.

Pray, Montana

Sept. 26, 1975

A group of about 24 of us moved from Mammoth to Chico Hot Springs resort near Pray, about 25 miles south of Livingston. Included were Nat Reed, Gardner Grant, Frank Richardson, Ernie Schiebert, Pete and Betty van Geytenbeek, etc. After checking in, most of us set out for the El Puy ranch about 8 mi. N of here on highway 89, where there are a series of spring creeks and ponds. Mr. El Puy charges fishermen \$25 a day to fish there, and he encourages catch and release. Woody and I fished with Nat, first on a run below the house, later upstream a mile or so. I took one nice rainbow of about 17" on a #18 nymph but didn't get any other good fish - some small rainbows. Schiebert of course had a magnificent day, catching good fish all day, he claims nearly all on very small dry flies (#20 and 22).

A rain squall hit us about 6 PM and there was a flurry of rising fish just before the rain began. I hooked one good brownie but straightened the hook (a #20 yellow nymph). Not too wet and cold to fish after the rain. Those that persisted didn't do much.

Had a magnificent dinner at the Chico dining room, with lots of drinks and too much red wine.

Pray, Montana

Sept 27, 1979

Today we fished Nelson Spring Creek Ranch, guests of Nat Reed. On this ranch the owner has built a substantial trout hatchery, marketing eating-size rainbows in the commercial trade. The stream above and below the hatchery has been little altered, flowing in a normal channel, wide and quite shallow (mostly knee deep) with beds of watercress and algae. Hundreds of good sized rainbows (up to 20") feed in plain sight but that doesn't mean that they take a fly readily!

We fished alternately with dry flies and nymphs, size #20 mostly - which of course means a lot of fish are hooked and then quickly lost, especially when they get into the moss beds. But Frank Richardson overcame all these problems and kept landing and unhooking big fish all day while the rest of us struggled to bring a few to net. We kept several fish for lunch and cooked them on my Charnglow grill - they were fine!

At dusk Frank shifted to a big colorful streamer and walking down the middle of the creek, casting downstream with quick jerky retriever, he took 7 more big ones - 3 rainbow and 4 brownies. I used a squirrel tail and didn't get a strike!

Said good-bye to the gang after dinner - Nat, Frank, Gardner Grant, Emil Schubert, etc. We set out for home at 6 PM Sept. 28.

Sorenson

Oct 6 and Oct 13, 1979

On Sat. Oct. 6 Dennis, Woody and I put out decoys and trimmed the blinds. Curly gave us a very good trim job this year, with a sharp chopper. We spread the floating decoys and piled the stick-ups where they will go after water softens the ground. Sorenson pond and some of the Thousand Acres ponds have water already and we saw several hundred spruce sitting peacefully. A thousand or more came over from some point to the south.

A week later, Oct. 13, Woody and I came up to clean the clubhouse and install a new refrigerator and electric stove. Found the pond full so we set all the stickups. The layout is ready to shoot. There were about 1200 spruce on our pond, which moved over to the main pond when we disturbed them.

We are surprised by the numbers of kestrels. On Oct. 6 we saw 9. On Oct 13 we counted 14 coming in and 21 going out! This number usually does not come up until mid-November.

On the way out to our pond we jumped a magnificent prairie falcon. He flew ahead of us for several hundred yards, just coasting along. No flight of butor yet, nor hites.

Sorenson

Oct. 20, 1979

Opening day proved to be a bent - one of the best for some years back. Rained the night before, but at daylight the rain had stopped and a brisk SW breeze was blowing. The birds worked into the wind, intent on settling in the grassy shelter of the south end of our pond. Birds #4 (Ted) and #5 (Kennis) had a fabulous shoot. Woody and I held down the main pond blinds and had practically no shooting until Ted and Kennis went out, and we moved to the south blinds. Had no trouble finishing our limits, all sprigs. There were only a handful of teal, wigeon, and shovelers, and not many mallards either. Just sprigs!

We sat on the big tile at the SE corner and plucked our birds, watching the flight which continued long after we quit shooting.

But about noon it started to rain, and continued intermittently until almost dark. The pheasant shooters went out but had scant action - birds seem to hide out in wet grass. I took a nap instead, which showed good judgement.

For dinner I made up a venison stew from a rump roast of my last year's buck, carried this far in my freezer. It was excellent (the stew I mean).

Rain stopped and they started to clear by bed time.

Sorenson

Oct 21, 1979

Sky was clear before breakfast but by daylight a heavy fog had rolled in. I was first choice and went to #4 and sat there till 8:30 with only an occasional glimpse of ducks in the fog. About 8 PM the fog must have lifted to the East because a heavy bombardment set in which lasted an hour. Our fog slowly dissipated between 8:30 and 9:00 and Woody (in #5) and I got scattered shooting. Ted and Ed O'Connor on the main pond had nothing. Flight ended by 11 PM when we all quit.

Going back to the start of shooting time, three ducks loomed up coming at me from the south, one of which was a cock sprig. As they approached two of them lit, including the cock. I nailed the other one on a long pass shot and when the dog delivered it its legs had turned orange and its beak had become very wide. A spoonie!!

With that misplay taken care of, I ended up with four sprigs and gave the spoonbill to Little Joe. Woody had 6 sprigs.

~~Yesterday~~ ^{Friday} we checked all the wood duck boxes. Three were functional, one had the lid off, one was missing. The box facing the timber gathole had produced a brood of wood ducks!

Season: 1979-80

[illegible]

Sorensen

Oct 27, 1979

Clear and still at daylight and very few ducks in the air. The big flights of a week ago must have left with the mid-week rains and nobody came back down to take their places. What few ducks worked our pond all went to the south end, as last week. Ted got 4 birds in #4, Dennis and Justin had 4 in #5, and Woody had one spig in #2. I didn't fire my gun in #6 though I sat there from 6:50 to 11:15 AM. More teal and shorelarks today. One little bufflehead female swam about in my decoys, diving for non-existent minnows and a single ring-neck came by early.

In the afternoon we put on a pheasant hunt working first the hot corner and next the north ditch and bullrush swale at east end of it. In the swale we found 75 or more birds. We had a fairly good surround and enjoyed some hot shooting for a minute. I dropped three birds with three shots, all in the corn. Sike went in and brought them out one by one.

Little Justin got two ducks and two pheasants. He is getting to be a real hunter.

Saw 23 kestrels on the trip home. Rough-legged hawks are showing up too - saw three today.

Sorenson

Oct 31, 1979

Ken Morrish and I set up in #5 but there was very little action there. Woody had two shots and two ducks in #4 in first 15 minutes but spent the rest of the morning looking. It appeared that some birds were working over no. 2 so we moved over there about 7 AM. Nothing much came, however, despite a rather brisk NW breeze. He scratched out a few small birds but had only one shot at a hen sprig and lost her in the beet field to the west (though I spent half hour looking for her). He quit the blinds at 11 AM.

Over on the main Belmore pond Ted and Bill Markle got 6 or so sprigs apiece, and on Mound Farm Selby Thorne and guest had 7 sprigs and 3 mallards. So we were pretty clearly out of the flight line.

We did better on pheasants. Two drives - "hot corner" and the tule swamp, yielded shooting for everybody and a total of 12 pheasants. I missed the first shot but killed the next four dead - no cripples, no runners. Sahé did a nice retrieve on one bird that fell in extremely heavy cover in the middle of the tule swamp.

On the way home we went by Stauffer's to pick up some meat that Woody and I had on order. Counted only 14 kestrels on that route.

Sorenson's

Nov 7, 1975

After four days of intermittent rain we finally got a dry morning, light cloud cover, light north breeze. All parts of our pond had a bit of action - Ted had 3 sprigs and a spoonie in #4, Woody got 3 sprigs in #2, and I came out with five miscellaneous ducks in #6 (2 sprigs, 1 g-w teal, 1 ring-neck and 1 lesser scaup). The ring-neck and the scaup were together with one other bird; I got the two of them in one shot at about 45 yds.

The sprig I hit at long range sailed down in the NE corner of the pond, hitting the water hard in the weed belt. After two or more hours I went over there, expecting to find the bird either dead or crawled up on the shore. Instead I found the bird hiding in emergent rushes, ~~well~~ deep water. The dog dashed after it and the bird dove. For 10 minutes I watched for its bill to appear but saw nothing. Dog kept working. Finally I went over where the bird had disappeared and began looking down in the water. Spotted tail feathers emerging from a clump of sunken vegetation and then I could see the head, thrown back and bill pointed up, but a foot under water. The bird clearly was drowning itself rather than surfacing. No wonder we lose some divers!

Light shooting on other ponds too, though everyone got some good birds.

Sorenson

Nov 10, 1979

Foggy as hell! I had first choice and went to #4 but didn't do much business (one wigeon!) After lunch we had a good pheasant hunt and I got two cock birds. Home early to go to New Haven on the night airplane.

Nov 17, 1979

Hard rain yesterday, terminating about sundown. There had been a lot of ducks on the property according to Ted, but by daylight they were all long gone. I had a couple of shots and got one fat hen sprig. Later we went snipe hunting and for the first time this year found a good number of birds on the south end of our pond. I bagged six.

Our ladies arrived in late afternoon for a festive holiday banquet. I cooked the turkey.

Nov 17, 1979

Betty came with me to #5 blind where we sat all morning watching the shorebirds and enjoying the delicious sunshine. But no ducks. About 8:30 the SW breeze died out and a brisk N breeze began, which brought on a high overhead flight north bound. A few pairs and small flocks came in and Ted got three sprigs in #6. He had no shooting in #5.

Left the blind about 10 AM and I went for snipe. Got seven more, to give a week end bag of 13.

Sorenson's

Nov 28, 1979

Although I was first choice on our pond I accepted an invitation from Bill Markin to shoot on the main club. I went to Grand, Bill to Gilmore double. It didn't matter though, because no flight developed on the big pond. At daylight a pair of mallards came by me and I got the greenhead. An hour later a little band of 5 canvasbacks came boring by me at about 40 yds. and I missed a big duck both barrels. Bill shot only one ineffectual shot and quit at 5:30. I left at 10:30. Although there were snipe overhead all morning none came down to the pond until 10:10 AM when two drakes dropped in at the west end. Until then countless flocks had given us a circle or two and then left. On our pond the boys had 5 ducks of miscellaneous birds. Woody had a bit of action at #2, but his bag included a teal and a widgeon.

After lunch we went for pheasants, but well-executed surround maneuvers of hot corner, timber pond, and the north sump yielded a total of three birds. We found a concentration of several hundred doves in scrub cottonwood, along the canal north of hot corner, but we couldn't find any way to get any shooting. I got one bird - only dove among the four of us!

A few hawks are hanging about the ranch now, and two saws lit on the Gilmore pond near me. We saw two prairie falcons as we drove out.

La Grulla - Piedras Blancas

Dec. 3, 1979

I flew to Orange Co. airport yesterday from which point George Caldwell drove me down to La Grulla, arriving in time for supper. This morning we set out with Alejo for the Piedra Blanca area, west of Santa Tomas almost to the coast. I have been hearing about the enormous crop of quail this year, but what we saw along the road surpassed my expectations. I lost track but I think we saw at least 18 coveys along the road, and of those that flew some were pretty big - 100 to 300 birds. This was between the top of the grade above Santa Tomas and our hunting area - a distance of about 15 miles. Coming home in the mid-afternoon we saw as many or more. The birds were clustered around areas under dry grain cultivation - barley mostly.

Where finally we stopped to hunt we worked two coveys - one of 50 and the other 100 birds, living in strips of brush surrounded by barley, quite level with low brush. Very easy hunting in other words. I shot very well - knocked down 14 birds with 18 shells, but I lost four running cripples - a bad show. Now I yearned for a good retriever. After George finished his limit we drove to a grove of acamover and corbed six young birds in jail on the fire. Of 22 birds, 12 were young and 10 adult, so the enormous population was as much a function of high carry-over as of high current production.

Saw one Cooper and one sharp-shinned hawk, and numerous places where quail had been eaten. Not many doves seen today - they apparently are gorged up elsewhere.

La Grulla - Agua Blanca

Dec 4, 1979

Left the Club rather late for lower Agua Blanca, with George, the Rhodes, the Booths, Felix and Nacho. When we moved into the stringers of brush and shallow ravines along the north edge of the grain stubbles we found hundreds of birds completely scattered — many singles or little groups up to five or six, but no proper coveys here. This condition must have originated from persistent hunting, not from hawks or natural disruptions. We don't know who has been shooting there but we saw plenty of shells.

Hunted as a group (in a line) north and east, then back to the cars. In two hours we had 29 birds and were all exhausted in the heat. I could barely walk at the end and had Nacho carry my gun and hold my arm. I started out shooting well, but deteriorated as the hunt progressed. Bagged 7 birds with 17 shells, lost 3 runners. Of the 29 birds, only 5 were adults and 24 young indicating a much better hatch here than out toward the coast where we were yesterday.

Again we saw virtually no doves today, although there was a big pile of dove feathers at our lunch site, indicating that some other hunters found some.

Had lunch at a beautiful spring with big sycamore trees situated just west of the highway at foot of woodchopper grade, close to the Agua Blanca turnoff (just N). Cooked quail again over the coals. Felix and Nacho checked a covey of birds on the slope above camp — estimated 1000 birds on the slope.

La Grulla - Santo Tomas Valley Floor

Dec 5, 1979

A few kilometers beyond Santo Tomas a road drops sharply off from the highway to the left, down to the floor of the valley. As we started down we encountered a bunch of $50 \pm$ quail which we started after but they had a tendency to fly back up the mountain so we quit them quickly and went out in the valley in search of a more friendly bunch. But we were a helluva long time finding them. Lots of tracks but no birds for about an hour and a half. Finally encountered a nice little covey of 45 or 50, and worked on them until noon. Took 10 birds in all, of which 3 were adults. I shot pretty well on this bunch, bagging 6 with 10 shells and losing two others down hard but apparently runners.

This valley has some heavy patches of cholla cactus, so dense in places that you can't walk through. In one such area we found a mob of loafing mourning doves - at least 100. We tried to hunt them but they simply flew to hell and gone out of there. I got one before they were gone.

In the section where we hunted today there had been no grain grown this year. Some extensive stubble fields were a year old. I suspect that may be one reason we didn't find more birds. They probably moved to the valley fringes where fresh barley stubble was available.

We came back to the Club for a Mexican lunch - chiles rellenos, enchiladas, frijoles. After a nap I walked out to the point to watch the shorebirds on the mudflats (very low tide). Then put the home covey of quail to bed in the bushy trees along the east bank. (west of the Club house).

La Grulla - Rancho Viejo

Dec. 6, 1979

George Caldwell left today so I was invited to hunt with the Rhodes and the Bootes. We set out on an "exploring hunt", which I have been led to believe is heavy on the exploring and a bit casual about the hunting. We drove down the Santa Tomas River to within 5 km. of the ocean, then turned south and climbed to the top ridges seeking an unnamed valley that Peg and Carol had seen and admired last spring. We found a pretty valley but they insisted it was the wrong one. As we explored further we had a flat tire that changed the game plan considerably. After changing the tire we found a nice live oak with good shade, pitched camp and cooked quail (brought from home) in the coals. After lunch, about 2 PM, we heard quail chattering in the brush nearby and with guns geared up we flushed the coveys of at least 80 birds. Followed the bulk of the bunch and had a nice little shoot until about 4 PM. We ended up with 17 birds, of which 3 ♂ were adults, the rest young. I shot better than yesterday (8 birds with 15 shells) but again lost three birds down hard and supposedly dead. Two runners I spotted and shot on the ground. Again I say how much I yearn for a dog.

On the way out this morning we saw quail in six places, mostly unhuntable. Coming home in the evening we again saw coveys out feeding - one very good bunch on an open hill where the cover was largely royal dense slumps. I would rather not be dropping dead birds (or worse yet cripples) in that stuff.

Again today I saw two Cooper hawks, several kestrels, one marsh hawk, but no falcons.

La Grulla

Dec 7, 1979

Today was sleek day - I didn't leave the Club. George left yesterday at Blue Rhodes today, so I had no wheels. I enjoyed the leisure however. Visited the "paradise" several times to watch birds on the Bay and took a long walk eastward along the shore far beyond the tomato field.

Principal ducks are bufflehead, surf scoter (and I think common scoter), scaup, and a few ruddy ducks. Also one swan - a young bird with gray head has spent the day paddling about the south end of the bay. Also western grebe (a "pod" swimming in close ranks, I counted 32), eared (?) grebe, one Pacific loon. Off shore birds - godwits, willets, black-bellied plover, spotted sandpiper, and assorted peeps. Several dozen pelicans (about half young) and lots of gulls, terns, some cormorants. Ashore, Audubon warblers are everywhere, plus Saye phoebe, orange-crowned warbler, Bewick wren, house wren, kestrel, short-eared owl, marsh hawk, Brewer blackbird, starlings, and a fine covey of 50 or so quail! They live right along the shoreline and I found them foraging this morning far out in the tomato field. I am told it has been years since there were quail here in the yard. That may be further evidence of population pressure in the countryside. Chung tells me of a massive die-off some years back when the population was abnormally high. "Birds lying dead all over the ground." To above list add mockingbird, kingfisher, white-crowned and golden-crowned sparrow, brown towhee.

Killed 25 quail brought in by Howard Randal party.

La Grulla - Cat Springs

Dec 8, 1979

Today I was invited to accompany John and Sally Boyle and Dick and Pat Sinclair. We went down the highway to Woodchopper Grade (where the sycamore spring is - see Dec 4) and turned right up the grade about 5 miles, where the track emerges into an extensive network of grain fields with brushy hills and stringers interlaced. Encountered big coveys along the road and two that we worked over, at least 100 birds species. We ended up with 34 birds before lunch, most of which were taken by John and Dick. Pat and I trailed along in the rear, shooting from time to time but not getting very many. The age ratio was 12 adults to 22 young, intermediate between the coast and the interior valleys. Crops of several birds examined were full of star thistle seeds with a few legumes. I have seen no grebes as yet in any crops examined.

Again I saw two Cooper hawks at at least six places where quail had been killed and consumed. With the present high population I suspect that quail hunting is highly profitable for hawks.

An old campesino came out to check us and have a yarn, and he repeated the statement, heard frequently, that this is the highest quail population he ever remembers. He also spoke of big concentrations of doves near the water holes, but we didn't encounter these until we were leaving, when we saw 100 or more stuck in some low trees near Cat Spring. Didn't go after them. Saw half a dozen big coveys along the road as we left, several over 100.

Cooked quail in foil in the coals 22 minutes - perfect!!

La Grulla - Chocolate, Cancer Man

Dec 9, 1979

Hunted today with the David Hughes, Bill Banninger, and Paul Clearys. We drove up Chocolate grade above Santa Tomas and a few miles along the road we began seeing coveys of birds, several over 100. Finally chose one of perhaps 200, but they went quickly up on steep hillside and the hunt soon lost me. I was struggling up the foothill slopes - sliding, falling and cursing - while the shooting moved steadily away from me uphill. Nonetheless I caught up with a few strays and downed six, retrieving four. The other three boys had 34 birds. Two of the wives - James Hughes and Judy Banninger - are regular bird dogs, walking behind their husbands, spotting falls and retrieving. We reassembled at 10:30 and started for the lunch spot under a big sycamore grove at Cancer Man. There we had a most elaborate lunch. First we all sat in a circle plucking quail, until we had 20 or so done. Then two charcoal briquette grills were set up and lit, one for the quail, the other for toasted bolillos. After a nice sequence of tequila drinks the birds were cooked and everyone ate two or three beautifully done quail, basted with butter, plus apple sauce, melon slices, papayas, toast and white wine. Then after leisurely clean-up we set out looking for a covey to replace the birds we had eaten. Found a big bunch nearby and shot 24 more. This was easy walking and I got four birds, no strain, no sliding. I loved it. Bag for the day - 12 adults and 50 young, good production.

Looking out we found a number of coveys but three of them, totalling at least 250 birds, were within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of one another.

We still haven't had an opportunity to get into the morning doves.

La Grulla - Los Cochis

Dec 10, 1979

Chuck Cotton drove ~~and~~ all this way in search of some doves, but we didn't find any. Instead we found the biggest quail concentration I have ever seen. On the way in we stopped periodically to admire one big covey after another. Finally came back to the point where we put up a big bunch last year (with Boyle, Selmins, Dick Smelair) and when we flushed the bunch of perhaps 200 they went east across the big plain, picking up other coveys of 100 to 300 as they flew. Birds literally rolled across the plain ahead of us. Chuck and I added our estimates of separate groups, and figured 2000 quail were on that flat. Now did we jump them all. Some good groups peeled off to the left running. No covey ever really scattered. They just kept running ahead of us in the sparse cover and across some big burned areas. Get enough slowed down so we got our limits in an hour. I shot well at first (7 birds, 10 shells) no lost birds - then disintegrated and lost two, missed several more. My eighth bird came finally from another covey on the way out.

On the basis of previous sampling I expected this interior population to be very high in young, but it wasn't - 8 adults, 12 young. Must have been a big carry-over of adults in this locality if our sample represented the population.

There have been many very large fires this year. Cotton estimates that at least one-eighth of the country has burned. Some fires are thousands of acres in extent. Presumably the heavy rains produced lots of grass and fuel that could not be consumed by the standing crop of cows. Hence the country was highly flammable.

La Grulla - Los Cochis and Agua Blanca

Dec. 10, 1979 (cont.) By the same token, areas that you would call highly overgrazed most years are suddenly undergrazed in a big rainfall year, which encourages successful quail reproduction. The fires make no contribution to quail welfare — on the contrary they destroy cover which will take years to regrow. Quail forage around the edges of the burns and when driven by hunting they cross the naked hills running — highly vulnerable to predation no doubt.

Going in this morning we jumped a white-winged dove. Coming out we saw one foraging in a sandy wash and jumped and shot it. After lunch we continued our quest for mourning doves, turning in toward Agua Blanca where I recall lots of doves in 1978. A mile or so across the grain fields we saw a few doves on a fence bordering a narrow draw with thorn trees. Got out and started stirring them around and had some instant shooting. Then a regular flight started coming at us from the west, flying like arrows down wind, 20 to 40 yds high. We had a delightful shoot from 1:45 to 2:30, using plenty of shells but hitting enough of them to limit out with 10 apiece before 3:00 PM. By that time the flight was over and all the birds were scattered out in the stubble fields feeding. We timed it just right.

The amount of water in this country is amazing. Nearly all washes have intermittent pools and many have flowing streams. Cotton says from the air you will see many playas and bolsones sopping wet or even overflowing. Some aquifers were certainly recharged during those two rainy years.

La Grulla, Chocolate Grade Km. post 13-14 (Zim Barrs)

Dec 11, 1979

Chuck took me to a brushy knoll of perhaps 20 acres surrounded by barley stubble. We drove slowly around the knoll and spotted the covey of about 250 feeding along the edge. Chased them around the knoll but they kept leaving in groups of 20 to 50, flying across fields to heavy brush to the west. Gave them up with about half limits and went after another group of equal size that we saw fly (or rather heard fly) when our initial covey first flushed. Pursed the second bunch into heavy cover and finished our limits without really breaking the covey up. It was relatively level walking and my legs held up so that I shot pretty well - 9 birds with 15 shells.

Just to the north of us Tom Slagoe and his party were shooting yet another covey. I had no estimate on size of that bunch but there was plenty of powder burned.

Today I saw two hawk attacks on quail. I shot a bird that fell in the open field and lay there fluttering. To my surprise a kestrel pounced on it and stood on its breast defiantly as I approached. How about that for bravado! Later on the road out we were parked watching perhaps 500 or 600 quail feeding on a flat near Km. post 17 when a rough-leg came swooping down on a cluster of birds under a small bush. The hawk hit the ground in a cloud of dust and of course all the quail had shipped out from under his feet. He sat there looking around, shook his feathers as though to say "Oh what the hell," and flew away right over the covey without giving them another glance.

La Grulla

Dec 11, 1979 (cont.)

Some estimates of quail numbers along the Chocolate Grade west of Santa Tomas. Between Kilometer posts 6 and 14 we counted the following coveys as we started toward home:

11 coveys between km. posts 7 and 14, averaging 175 = 1925

A mob by km post 6 of 600 (last time seen by = 600

Church & Caldwell's estimated to be 1000) ———

Total birds along 8 km (5 mi.) of road ——— 2525

Usable range about $\frac{1}{4}$ mi. on each side of the road, counting strips of cultivated barley, brush adjoining, and of course the stream parallel to the road

This would come to $5 \text{ mi} \times \frac{1}{2} \text{ mi} = 2\frac{1}{2}$ square miles

Density therefore would be

$$\frac{2525 \text{ birds}}{2\frac{1}{2} \text{ sq. mi.}} = 1010 \text{ birds to the square mile}$$

$$\frac{1010}{640} = 1.58 \text{ birds per acre}$$

This computation involves only birds seen by us. There may be additional coveys (probably small) higher in the side canyons. It is understood, though, that this winter concentration along a favorable narrow valley does not represent density over a large area. Yet it is remarkable considering that this country is in no way managed for quail.

After lunch Chuck flew me to Orange Co. Airport, from which point I took a commercial flight home.

Bird tally - La Grulla, 1979

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Shooters</u>	<u>Ad.</u>		<u>Im</u>		<u>Total</u>
			♂	♀	♂	♀	
Dec 3	Piedra Blanca	BSL, Caldwell	3	7	6	6	= 22
Dec 4	Agua Blanca	BSL, GC, Rhodes & Boëche	3	2	12	12	= 29
Dec 5	Sta. Tomas Valley	BSL GC	3	0	4	3	= 10
"	Cancer Man	Rhodes, Boëche	1	5	7	7	= 20
Dec 6	+ Chocolate Riv. Rancho Viejo	Rhodes Boëche, BSL	3	0	6	8	= 17
Dec 7	Inland coast	Howard Randolph party	6	5	5	9	= 25
Dec 8	Cat Spring	Boyle, Sinclair, BSL	8	4	12	10	= 34
"	"	?	4	3	9	4	= 20
Dec 9	Chocolate	{ Banning J. Hughes }	4	3	14	17	= 38
"	Cancer Man	{ Cleary & BSL }	3	2	11	8	= 24
Dec 10	Los Cochis	Cotton, BSL	5	3	6	6	= 20
Dec 11	Chocolate (twin farms)	Cotton, BSL	7	5	2	6	= 20
			—	—	—	—	—
			50	39	94	96	= 279

$$\frac{89 \text{ adults}}{190 \text{ imm.}} = \frac{100}{x}$$

$$x = 213$$

$$213 \text{ imm.} : 100 \text{ ad.}$$

Sorenson

Dec 15, 1979

There have been a succession of foggy mornings on shoot days. Add one more! It was thin at daylight but got denser as the sun rose and didn't start breaking until 10:30 AM. I saw my first duck (a ♀ spoonie) at exactly 10:46. Finally got a shot at 11:59 when Ted shot and drove a single cock spring off the pond over me. I got him and that constituted my shoot for the day. Dennis & Jason had 5 in #5, Ted had 2 in #5, Woody had 1 in #4 and I had 1 in #6. Big deal!

Yet there were plenty of birds in the area. Woody and I drove out Friday evening and saw a good batch of ducks on our pond and also on Sorenson pond. In the fog you could hear them going over all morning.

After lunch we went out for pheasants but found the surviving birds pretty wary about hunting. Worked the swamp and then two of the ditches in the northeast corner of Vaboc but only bagged 4 birds between us. They would run out into plowed fields rather than get trapped on ditches.

Woody and I then went for snipe and had a bit of shooting in the boggy area between Kaiser pond and Little Joe's. Because of continuing dry weather the snipe are still concentrated around our ponds.

Saw a prairie falcon and lots of rough-legs. Our kestrel count coming up Fri. afternoon was 30.

Sorenson's

Dec 26, 1979

Brought Fritzy out for a big duck shoot and ended up with a dud. After three days of torrential rain and wind, the weather cleared and a strong north wind blew at daylight. The view from #6 blind was promising - bunches of ducks including plenty of spruce buffeting over us at 30 yds right up till shooting time. Then the flight lifted and veered away from the blind, and we stayed till 10 PM without getting a decent shot. Fritzy popped away at a few flaring birds without drawing a feather. Ducks were rafted up in the flooded corn field just east of us (between our pond and Belmore). Even as we left there was still action over that field. Boys in the main pond and in Sorenson killed a few ducks but no-one got a limit.

I haven't seen so many shovellers in many a day. Big flocks kept cruising by but even they wouldn't give our spread a decent pass. I wonder if the patching decoys, flashing wet in the sunlight, may spook them.

Going out in mid-day we only counted 12 kestrels. The big storm doubtless drove many to the shelter of foothills but also the strong N wind blowing all day may have put birds into sheltered perches, out of sight.

Saw very few geese - only some small gaggers or honkers.

Sorenson

Jan 5, 1980

Another non-shoot day. I went into blind #5 and ended up with two spoonies which I shot deliberately, in cold blood. Betty and I ate them on Sunday and they were delicious, incidentally. I watched three spoonies feeding within 30 yds of my blind for nearly half an hour. They moved along in little circles in about 3 inches of water, nibbling along the bottom seeking seeds I guess.

Sorenson

Jan 12, 1980

We tried it once more, with little to show. Woody has a bit of shooting in #4 and came out with 3 wigeon and 4 sprigs (mostly shiny and molting, however). I was skunked in #5. At 10 PM we left the blinds and started picking up decoys. The continuous rain this past week has us uneasy about possible flooding. We took out all the floating decoys from #2 and #6, and most of those from #4 and #5. Left the stick-ups.

As it turned out the flood came on Jan. 14 and put us under 10 ft. of water. Dennis and Justin stayed over Sunday, Jan 13, and cleared all the floating decoys, which saved them. We will go back after the stick-ups when the flood recedes.

It's been a pretty lousy duck season at Sorenson's!

Richmond Hunting Club properties west of Arbutus

Jan. 19, 1980

Luna has been a member of this club for two years and hadn't yet been up to see their leased land. So today we went to the units labeled "quail hunting". Arrived about 9:30 AM and with the aid of maps we looked over the two blocks. Most of the larger piece (on ridge between head of Sand Creek and head of Cache Creek) is tall chinquapin, basically uninhabitable. There are spots along Sand Creek that can be hunted and we chased a covey of a dozen birds, killing one. Met another hunter from the Club named James Manley and he showed us around where he has found quail. We didn't find them but he put out a single, which I got. Had lunch in a sunny glade with Manley.

After lunch we hunted a bit more in foothills along Sand Creek, then moved to the other property which is on lower Sand Creek just before the stream leaves the hills for the flat orchard country near Arbutus. Jim left us but Luna and I scouted out a nice little covey of 15 or 20, of which we took seven with some rather superb shooting. With 8 shells we knocked down 8 birds, retrieving 7 (Luna lost one runner):

Adult		Immature			
♂	♀	♂	♀		
2	0	4	3	= 9	

It was all together a fine day. Home by 7:00 PM.

Conaway Ranch, 6 mi. SE of Woodland

Jan 29, 1980

Lee Baldoch invited me for a final pheasant hunt to close the season. It turned out to be a sparkling, crisp day with brisk north wind. We started at 9:15 and ended at 5:00 PM, enjoying every minute of it. For me, the highlight of the day was the stellar performance of my pup Sabe, who finally discovered what a dog is supposed to do on a pheasant hunt. Up to now he has tended to cling on my heels, waiting for me to shoot something so he could go into action as a hot-shot retriever. Today he discovered that if he went into the cattails and pushed the birds out there would be more retriever. Scent conditions apparently were excellent, for the dog could work along the lee side of a ditch and suddenly turn into the cover with enthusiasm and vigor, and out would pop a pheasant. He killed 8 cochin and I liberated him — passed up dozens of wild hens who will be the little mothers of the 1980 crop. Both Lee and I shot very well considering the strong wind and the curving accelerated flight the birds display on such a day. I shot 10 shells and killed 7 birds, all dead, Lee got 2 for 2.

We drove to the north end of the ranch to see the Cache Creek settling basin, prepared as a waterfowl refuge. All under water today, with 200 or so swans in the middle of it, and a few canvasbacks as well. A few little bunches of geese in the air but ducks largely loafing on flooded grain fields. Lots of kestrels on wires all over the ranch.

712 The Alameda, Berkeley

Feb 10, 1980

Mourning doves started cooing yesterday, Feb 9, about mid-day. I heard one bird coo several times. Today cooing developed with a vengeance. I heard birds off and on all day. Just now (4:50 PM) as I was out on the deck, a pair of doves flew in presumably to feed. But the male crowded the female along the roof, cooing to her and strutting. She saw me and left, alighting on the power line across Capistrano. He lit within a few inches of her and crowded her along the wire. She flew and he followed. Shortly thereafter another pair came to the feeder, the male right behind his lady. Earlier in the afternoon I saw a male in courtship flight - very brief but definite.

Starting about mid January we have had two white pigeons coming to the feeder - the first regular visitors in 20 some years I have fed here. These two are part of the big mob of city pigeons that feed on someone's garage roof across Capistrano. When I frighten them away they join the gang across the street. On two occasions they have brought another bird with them - a gray rock dove type. Usually though they come by themselves, every day about 9 AM.

I see very few band-tails in the neighborhood this year and they are usually far up the hill. No visits to my feeder at all.

Berkeley, 712 The Alameda

Re: domestic pigeons

Feb 28, 1980

In some years I have fed birds on my deck without attracting domestic pigeons. In the past year or so I have watched a growing flock gather at a garage roof across Capistrano where a neighbor feeds. Some time in January I noted for the first time two white pigeons on my feeder. Through that month and into February they began coming daily to feed, leaving the big flock of assorted birds across the street. On February 16 I was working in the shop and young Nathan Greeling came running to tell me my trap was full of birds. At least 15 to 18 pigeons had trapped themselves and were flopping about in the wire cage. I released them and have not seen a similar concentration back, but the two white ones, and sometimes an odd bird or so with them, keep coming every day.

Another day in mid-February Betty says a mixed group of domestic and band-tailed pigeons came to the feeder. She chased them away and closed the trap.

712 The Alameda, Berkeley

March 10, 1980

In the past two weeks the mob of city pigeons has started coming to my feeding tray almost daily. They follow the two white birds in, and crowd the tray like a bunch of boys, occasionally tripping the stick and catching themselves. On several occasions Betty has felt obliged to trip the trap to keep them out. When they come around — even just a couple of birds — the doves retreat from the tray and hang back a few feet away, or fly off.

Rio Negro

Bariloche, Provincia de Neuquen, Argentina
April 4, 1980

Today we arrived in Bariloche on Aerolineas Argentinas and met Payne and Anita in the airport, as they came in a few minutes after we did on Austral. The Pearsons have an apartment in Bariloche and will be here for a month or two, checking out some small mammal populations. We settled in the Edelweiss Hotel which we find delightful. Pearsons took us to dinner at a great little Argentine restaurant where we were served an assortment of meats, sausage, tripe on a grill over charcoal fire, placed on our table. Restaurant called "Nikola".

We have spent two days in Buenos Aires at the Plaza Hotel and found very little to make us happy. Buenos Aires is a massive city of 13 million Christians, all of them out to screw us in one way or another. The taxi drivers, head waiters, customs officials, bell boys, hotel desk clerks, and seemingly everyone else we ran into was rude and avaricious. But here in Bariloche we have a very different feeling of friendly relationships with everyone including bell boys, taxi drivers etc.

The 1000 mile flight over the dry pampas was reminiscent of desert situations in our own Southwest. Along rivers where irrigation was feasible there were fabulous orchards and truck gardens, but the dry plains were pretty sterile.

Commonest bird in Bariloche is the chimango "Milvago chimango" a small ^{butcher} falcon with creamy rump and wing patches.

Bariloche - Boat cruise to Puerto Best

April 5, 1980

Took a day cruise, first by bus up Lago Nahuel Huapi to a landing where we boarded a cruise boat on up to the head of the lake. Saw assorted gulls, coots, and ducks - mostly along marshy shores. Let me watch a condor soaring over Puerto Best. A big grebe (Podiceps major) is fairly common and I watched an adult ferrying young ones on its back. The young are striped black on white, giving a grey appearance.

Bariloche - bus cruise to Cascade Los Alerces and Cerro Tronador

April 6, 1980

Our cruise today was by bus generally south of Bariloche past Lago Gutierrez and Laguna Mascardi to the waterfalls called Los Alerces, thence up a steep serpentine road to the foot of the great volcano Mt. Tronador. The name "Thunder Mountain" comes from the frequent ice falls off the face of the big glacier which send rumblings like thunder down the mountain. We watched several cascades of ice tumbling down the cirque cliff and then heard the "thunder" following.

The forest belt is dominated by one of the big beech trees called "coihue". Above that is a belt of a smaller beech "lenga" with an understory of bamboo. Below the coihue is the foothill brush zone called "niré". Rainfall gradient goes from 120"/yr on the Chile side to 15" in the dry niré zone.

Bariloche to San Martin de los Andes

April 7, 1980

Ernie Schrieber arrived in Bariloche last night and today we set out with our guide and driver Jorge Berghman for our fishing base in San Martin. Most of the route followed open plains and foothills reminiscent of central Utah. The local cypress even looks like Utah juniper. Saw several flocks of geese (*Chloephaga ^{picta} ~~fulvica~~*) in pastures along the road, and where the highway skirts one of the lakes we were looking down on a handsome pair of black-necked swans (*Cygnus melanocoryphus*). A few dead jackrabbits on the road but saw no other wild mammals.

In San Martin we have settled in a charming little Swiss inn "La Raquette" run by a handsome woman Sra. Bracht and her son and daughter-in-law Sylvie. Another party of fishermen is here guided by Bill McLipe who took Woody and me down Henrys Fork two years ago. The fishing group is Alon ^{Spurling} Spaulding and his wife Kazia, from NY., Jim Slater from Los Altos, Ca., and Bob Kahn from Philadelphia.

After stowing our gear we went for an evening fishing to Rio Chimehuin half hour from here. It was a cold dark threatening evening and we caught no fish. Ernie didn't come with us but slept instead - he has been on a jet a good part of the last two days. Along the road we saw a small armadillo and ran it down for photographs, Woody holding while I manned a camera.

A lot of geese grazing in the pastures - called "carqueen" males mostly white - females rich brown

San Martin - Malles River 2 hours to north

April 8, 1980

First full day of fishing, but it began to rain at 5 AM and kept it up almost continuously through the whole day. This river is separated from Chile by only a low pass and gets a lot more rain than some other nearby areas. The Chilean pine comes thru this pass and we saw the vanguard of scattered individual trees. This area also is a center for the population of European red deer, and the stag season is on now. The river on the estancia where we fished is a center for wealthy stag hunters. We went in and admired the architecture and the stag heads.

I fished hard for two hours in the driving rain and hard wind but caught only one little tiddler of 10 inches. Ted got a nice rainbow of 2 pounds or so. Schueibert sat in the car until there came a lull in the storm when he rushed out to some water below our parking spot sheltered by willow and there the rainbows were coming up for some #18 brown ephemerids. He took 5 in a short time, the two largest 5 and 4 lbs. Woody was there when he landed one of those. Wind & rain started again and Schueibert quit, came back to the truck and took off his waders. Smart fisherman! We came home early and showered to get warm.

The other party had caught a few fish on a big olive streamer fly and Jim Slater was tying up a supply during happy hour.

Along the road we found a concentration of hawks arguing over a road killed jackrabbit - *Agouti* grande, caracaras, and Thielago.

Black bridge on Rio Chimehuin, about 15 mi. N San Martin

April 9, 1980

Still raining this morning so we went north with the hope that the Chimehuin might be fishable at Black Bridge. But we no more than cleared town when we were in a rear-end collision — some guy clobbered us from atrás. So we limped back to town and had the bumper removed. Started out again.

At Black Bridge we went to work, but it was cold and windy and the fish were not moving. Woody hooked and lost a good rainbow of about 2-3 pounds but none of the rest of us did any business. After several hours we moved the car down stream half a mile and tried some more. But it was still cold and windy. I'd caught a 2 pound brown and each of the rest of us caught some modest sized rainbows (mine was $15' \pm$). Schubert never left the car, and again he knew very well when it was worthwhile trying to fish.

There are quite a few cormorants along the river (Phalacrocorax brasiliensis) and a bunch of 30 or so passed me at one point. Also a good many geese (Canadensis) and a few torrent ducks. I quipped a snipe (Ceryle ^{militaris} ~~argentea~~) and identified a red-breasted meadow (Pezomachus ^{militaris} ~~defilippi~~). Saw a number of caracaras along the road.

The condition of grazing ranges in this area is superb. All animals are rounded-fat and I have not seen a single paddock that appears to be over-grazed. Most look to be considerably undergrazed which may explain why the cattle look so good.

Along the river down bank burrows that I take to be nutria.

San Martin de los Andes

April 10, 1980

After breakfast it was snowing hard but we set out anyway, hoping to reach a river nearby that we could fish. But the roads were so slushy, and getting worse rapidly, that we turned back and came home. Spent the day writing letters, field notes, and repairing gear.

The California quail was introduced on Estancia La Primavera along the Rio Trapel by the owner, Pim La Riviera. Release was made Dec. 25, 1945. The population became established and in 35 years has spread up to 100 kilometers, mostly along river valleys. Now I learn from the Fauna Silvestre officer that there has been a new focus established in the northern end of Neuquen Province, presumably from stock transferred from the Trapel area. The quail is not hunted here, and is not thought of as a game bird.

We are impressed with the abundance of rabbits. They are hard to see during daytime but show up at dusk along the roads, where many are killed by cars. They become a mainstay for the hawk - the ubiquitous Chimango, the big gray "Aguilacho grande", and caracaras. At some carcasses you find a gang of 10 to 15 of these three raptors scrapping over the remains. We have no guide to mammals so I am uncertain what the rabbit is. It appears intermediate between a Lepus and Sylvilagus, but I am told it actually is the European hare, introduced here

Rio Guilquihue, near San Martin airport

April 11, 1980

The snow stopped and intermittently during the day we had periods of sunshine. The water stayed cold however (50°) and the air was cold with quite a bit of wind. We all fished pretty hard up to dark and Ted got two fish of 2 lbs. or so apiece. None of the rest of us, including Ernie, did much.

On the way in we saw our first ibis (Theristicus candatus) called "bandurria" locally. Later we saw several small flocks in the pastures. They are basically brown with pale secondaries on the wing.

Along the riverbanks and especially in riparian thickets we see a good assortment of small birds, but unfortunately Olrog's "Las Aves de Argentina" is a poor guide and we can't do much with them. Bigger birds are easier and I get considerable help from Jorge who knows the vernacular names for most larger species. This helps to pin a species down in Olrog. The common cormorant for example is Phalacrocorax ^{brasiliensis} ~~peruviana~~ called "vigua' negro" by Olrog and vigua' by Jorge. The range maps in Olrog are extremely helpful.

Most valley pastures are well vegetated by bunchgrasses and shrubs and I see little sign of overgrazing. But Douglas Reid tells me that formerly there was a lot of overgrazing by sheep and on 4 million acres of public land there is still a lot of abuse, some of it by goats.



Rio Chimehuin, 31 km N of San Martin

April 12, 1980

Still cold and windy but we set out with some faith and optimism. Jorge took charge of the day's plans. He allocated beginning pools to each of us and guided me personally which I greatly appreciated. All of us fished hard and continuously from 11 AM to 3:15 PM without any goofing off. Still when we gathered for a bite of lunch there were only 4 fish of any size taken - 2 for Schrieber, 1 for Ted and 1 for Jorge. I watched Jorge play and land his - a male brownie of about 4 1/2 lbs, very bright yellow-orange on the tummy. Late afternoon and on to dusk we fished hard again and Schrieber got several more, up to 5 lbs. Ted had two more. Still there is very little action on the part of the fish.

We saw a llama in one paddock, which Jorge says is "wild", in the sense that it is not herded or penned. The native guanaco was long ago cleared out of this area and ranchers are interested in reestablishing some native mammals, so says Jorge.

I took off after a gang of geese (Chloephaga picta) called "Canguén" and took several photos, mostly flying. These birds are common on the pastures. They roost on gravel bars in the river.

The most obvious duck on the river is a spring sized bird, sexer alike, very musical voice, and white face and throat patch. Argy does not help much but I think it is Anas specularis which he calls "pato anteojos".

Rio Guilquihue near San Martin Airport

Apr 13, 1980

There were complications of Ernie Schuebert's imminent departure so we stayed close to San Martin. The cold continued with the worst wind we have yet had. During the day, from 10:45 AM until 5:15 PM we fished the whole river from the "Lombardy square" to the three poplars without taking a brown trout. Ted got one 15" rainbow. On this stream our friends fishing with Bill McClellan had fantastic fishing last week, with lots of fish over 20 inches. It's afraid the weather has screwed us good.

I keep coming back to the abundance of European hares (or rabbits as we have been calling them). On the walk from the river to the road, about 1/4 mile through grassy bottoms, we jumped 7 rabbits, as saw more from the car when Jorge picked us up. Also met another armadillo on this walk, same size as the one we photographed a week ago. Found some holes about 6" diameter, presumably dug by them.

Saw four lapwings (Polioptila caerulea) which Jorge calls "tero-tero". Yesterday I forgot to say we saw several white egrets (Ardea alba), and I jumped a snipe (Capella paraguensis) or "beasina".

Back to rabbits, they are having easily visible impact on a low shrub that is heavily browsed, twigs lying dried and wasted, apparently some cambium eaten. Took pictures.

As we came back to town we stopped to take photos of ox-drawn carts of firewood.

Douglas Reid Estancia on Rio Colorado

April 14, 1980

We finally got a break in the weather. Today broke clear, crisp-cold but sunny. Jorge took us to the Colorado which is about 2 hour drive from here. We were on the river by 11:30 and immediately were into fish. Most of them were rainbows from 10 to 17", but about a third were brownies, all between 20 and 22½". Between us we took 15 fish over 15", and Jorge had another half dozen or so not counted by us. I fished entirely with a peccora, or crayfish imitation, and from one pool took three brownies over 20". Fine, fat, colorful fish.

On the way out we saw rheas in two places and took photos, though they were far off. A pair of birds in each case. I asked about food and Jorge says they graze on grass and forbs. With protection by Douglas and neighboring ranches they are coming back well, or also are guanacos that occur in this same neighborhood. We looked hard but failed to see any. Red deer also are abundant on Douglas' place and we saw lots of tracks. Another numerous species is the tree Elanus leucurus of which we had seen only one specimen until today.

Coming home I tried to measure the rabbit population by what was visible along the road. From the ranch gate for the next hour I counted rabbits and totalled 59, or about a rabbit a minute. We were driving from 30 to 50 mph, averaging perhaps 40. That would be 1½ rabbits per mile. We killed two of these (3.4%) which will contribute to support of the hawk population tomorrow.

Douglas Reid Estancia on Rio Colorado

April 14, 1980 (cont.)

Quail are abundant in this watershed, which is something under 100 km from the original point of stocking on the Rio Trapal. We saw at least a dozen coveys along the road, all from 15 to 30 birds (no big coveys). As we drove out, a covey flushed in front of the car and one bird ended up flying beside me on the left side. All of a sudden a hawk materialized (Buteo jaysorum) close on the tail of the quail. The chase went for 100 yards the hawk a few feet behind but unable to gain. Quail literally flew into a thorn bush and the hawk had to veer off.

Rio Chimu, Black Bridge & below

April 15, 1980

Weather crisp and clear (ice in road puddles) and we set forth with a lot of "ze". But after a couple of hours of hard fishing we could see that we weren't going to do much. The water was up 6" or so from the first time we fished here - melting snow presumably - and it was much too cold, 46°F. So we moved camp to the Black Bridge, had lunch, and fished this section till dusk. I'd hooked and landed the only good fish - a 24", 5½ lb. male brown. Toward dusk there was a little surface action in the big pool by the bridge and I took a 14" rainbow on a dry fly. Water at this point had risen to 50°.

We really got into the rheas today. First a brood of

Rio Chimalum, Bladder Bridge

April 15, 1980 (cont.) half grown young ran across in front of us - about 10 I think. We shot a picture or two of their disappearing asses. Then a bit beyond we spotted 6 adults feeding on a hillside. Woody started to stalk them for a photo but he only got about 20 ft. when they started ad took off.

A big flock of geese returned to the bar where we found them a week ago. I took several photos of the birds sitting and in the air when I flushed them.

As we drove out a hind red deer bounded across the road in front of us. She looked very healthy and sassy, with good pelage and lots of bounce. We have seen lots of tracks but only this one deer so far.

I saw a pair of ducks that I had not seen before, possibly Anas georgica. The bills of both birds were conspicuously yellow, but precise identification in Oroya is impossible. Also saw several "mask-faced" ducks which may be Anas specularis.

As we approach the end of our visit to Argentina we are trying to pull our thoughts together. I am impressed with how well the "estancia system" works to protect the resources of wild lands, as compared to the "ejido system" in Mexico. A responsible manager of an estancia concerns himself about the land, the livestock, poage and livestock health. This leads to concern for the families that manage the land. In an ejido it is every man for himself. Also every burro, cow, and brown tailed pony.

Rio Gualquirne, San Martin airport

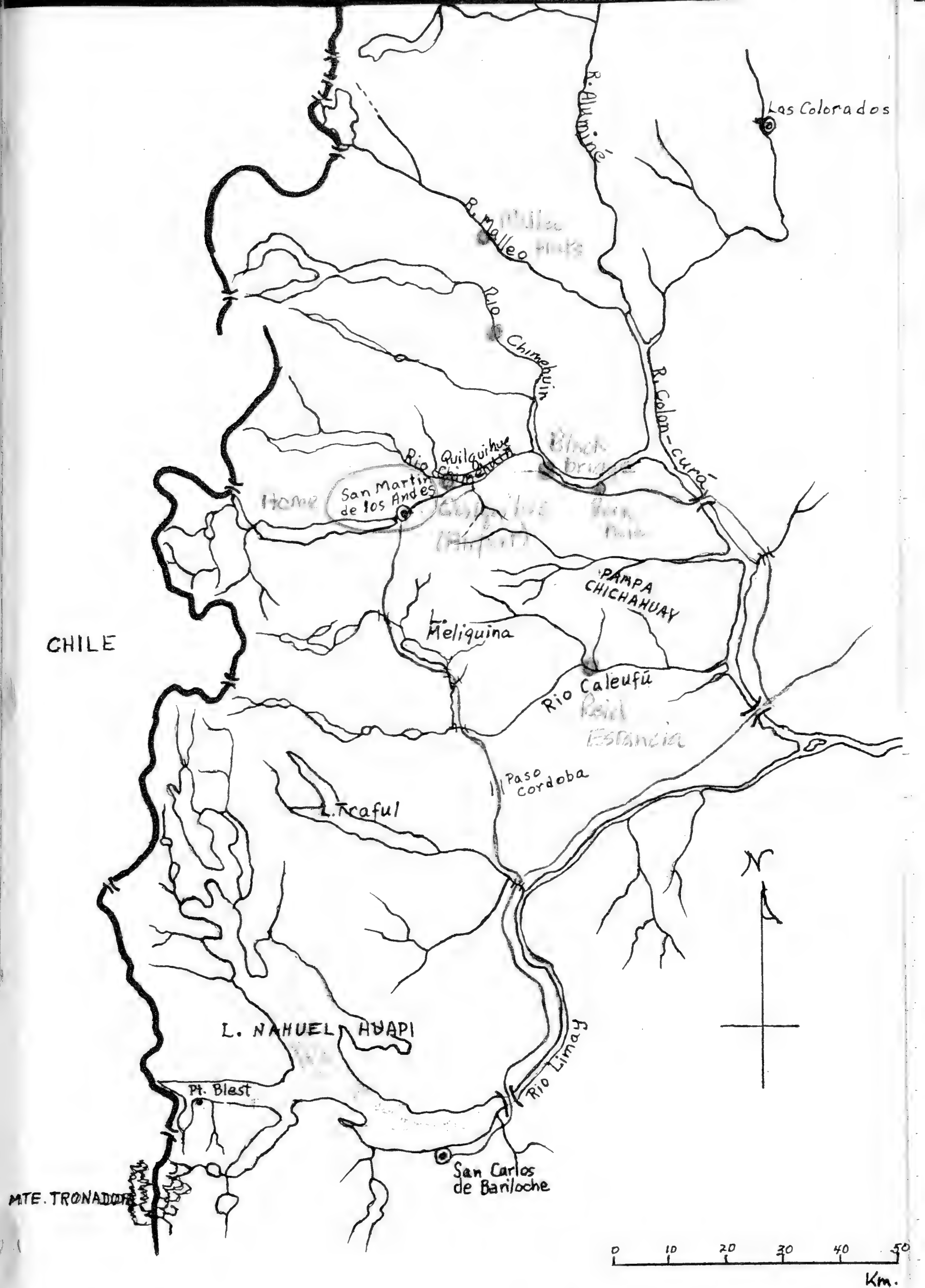
April 16, 1980

I am sitting in the truck with Jorge, watching heavy rain and snow. Woody and Ted are fishing. From Jorge I have just learned that there is a thriving venison industry here, much of the meat going to western Europe. The red deer is so abundant on some of these estates that the ranchers want them kept down. The local office of Direccion General de Recursos Ganaderos issues permits to commercial deer hunters to take specific numbers of animals from specific areas. All sex and age classes are shot except big stags, which are kept for sport shooting. Bodies of the deer shot are gutted and skinned on the spot, then delivered for sale to a wholesaler in San Martin who keeps them refrigerated until a truck load can be sent to Buenos Aires. From there the dressed meat goes by ship to Europe to compete with deer from New Zealand and Scotland. The value of a deer carcass here is about \$1⁰⁰ a pound which is close to the price of dressed venison in New Zealand. Antlers shed by the stags are gathered up by gauchos and these are sent to the Orient.

Deer are doing better here as livestock industry shifts from sheep to cattle. Santa Gertrudis and zebu strains are being used extensively and numbers of sheep and goats are steadily falling. Hence the rangers are in much better shape than formerly, which benefits deer and doubtless other vertebrates.

April 17, 1980

Jorge drove me to Bariloche. Rain high and dirty, including Tafel. Flew home.



Provisional bird list - Bariloche / San Martin areas

April 5-16, 1980

	<u>Common name</u>	<u>Locality</u>
<i>Rhea americana</i>	"Ostrich"	Chimichuín
<i>Ardeophaga major</i>	Big grebe	Lago Nahuel Huapi
<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Pied-bill	Lago Nahuel Huapi
<i>Phalacrocorax brasilianus</i>	Cormorant	general
<i>Casmerodius albus</i>	Gargá blanca	Carrhue
<i>Meristicus caudatus</i>	Ibici	Guilgichue
<i>Cygnus melancoryphus</i>	Black-necked Swan	Lago Melequima
<i>Chloephaga picta</i>	Common goose (cauquén)	General
<i>Anas specularis</i>	Pato anteojos	Juvín
<i>Anas sibilatrix</i> (?)	Pato overo	Chimichuín
<i>Merganetta armata</i>	Torrent duck	Rio Traful
<i>Vultur gryphus</i>	Condor	Mt. Tronador
<i>Coragyps atratus</i>	Black vulture	San Martin area
<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	Kite	Chimichuín
<i>Buteo polyosoma</i>	Gray "eagle"	General
<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Marsh hawk	San Martin
<i>Philvago chimango</i>	"Chimango"	Common everywhere
<i>Polyborus plancus</i>	Caracara	General
<i>Falco fusco caerulescens</i>	Falcon	Bariloche airport
<i>Falco sparverius</i>	Kestrel	San Martin
<i>Lophortyx californicus</i>	Cal quail	Rio Traful, etc.
<i>Anas leucoptera</i>	Coot	Nahuel Huapi, etc.
<i>Belonopterus caryocarpus</i>	"Jero-Jero", lapwing	San Martin airport
<i>Capella paraguayae</i>	Snipe	Chimichuín
<i>Larus marinus</i>	Gull	General

<i>Zenaidura macroura</i>	Dove	Bariloché
<i>Caprimulgus longirostris</i>	Night hawk	San Martín
<i>Lessonia rufa</i>	"Negrito"	Chimichin
<i>Atticora cyanoleuca</i>	Swallow	Black bridge
<i>Turdus rufiventris</i>	Robin	San Martín
<i>Agelaius thilius</i>	Blackbird	San Martín
<i>Pezetes militaris</i>	"Red-throat ictinid"	Chimichin
<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House sparrow	San Martín

A number of small wrens, flycatchers, passerines etc. we could not identify with Olrog's guide

Sorenson Ranch

April 26, 1980

Hennis, Woody, Dean, and I gathered for the annual spring ceremony of fencing the duck blinds. We had good team work and finished the job before lunch. This included bailing every barrel (Hennis did it) with several inches of sticky mud in the bottom. We moved a few clumps of Reed Canary grass to consolidate the islands and give better coverage of the barrels.

During the morning we saw a few pairs of mallards; presumably the hens have nests by now. Pheasant cock crowing now and then and the hens must be nesting too.

After lunch we mounted a wood duck box that had been rescued last fall. Put it about 20 ft. up on a big cottonwood on the main slough near where Barb killed a cock pheasant a couple of years back.

Then went after asparagus and found a good amount along the main slough border. Each of us took home a double batch. Peak time would have been a week or so earlier.

Dean is burning the corn stalks and other trash that accumulated on the home levee during the flood. Now he is threatening to rip-rap the levee with rocks — another loss of pheasant cover.

Madison Fork Ranch, West Yellowstone

June 28 - July 4, 1980

I flew into West Yellowstone June 27 and picked up only two of my three pieces of baggage. The missing bag was the one full of clothes. Happily the package of rods and the duffel bag of waders and fishing tackle came through. In a Budget rental car I set out for Jim Salisbury's (D) Ranch on the east side of Henry's Lake. Spent a delightful evening there with Jim.

Next morning I drove into W.Y. and picked up Carl and Lynn at the Westwood Motel. After a lot of shopping for essential items of clothing and toiletries for me, we drove to the Ranch where we were to be the only guests for two days.

Fished the pond before dinner and Carl took a nice fat brownie (17½", 2½ lb) which we had for breakfast next day. Sun was bright and things looked good until about 10 PM when clouds gathered and before night it began to rain. We did not see the sun again until the day we left, July 4.

Rain and low barometric pressure continued for the next five days. We caught a few fish in the stream and in the pond, but it was scanty pickin's, with few hatches of flies and fewer still enthusiastic rises. Each day until the last morning we kept two trout for breakfast, most of them 15 to 18". Lynn caught a nice 18 inch one next to last evening in the pond, and that really made the trip.

Madison Fork Ranch

June 28 - July 4, 1980 (cont.)

Our friends from Texas came in on Tuesday - Charlie, Sandy, Harry, and two new ones - Brooks and John. This year Lorenzo didn't make it. Maggie came in too on Tuesday afternoon and held court with drinks and dinner, making the place feel more like home.

Al and Ruth Dodge were there Sunday evening for dinner, and so also were Charlie, Nina and Doug - down from Bozeman where they had come to attend a wedding. That was a gala occasion for us and a great dinner party.

Back to the trout, Charlie continued to catch fish when none of the rest of us could do much. He fishes dry entirely with quite large flies - #2 in dark browns, or March brown. I did poorly trying to match the hatch of May flies but scored more on a fairly large (#14) royal wulff.

A cow moose joined us one evening at the pond. We saw deer several times and one day a weasel in a log pile where lodgepole killed by bark beetles had been piled for winter burning. No sign of elk hereabouts.

One of the kitchen girls (Randy) claims to have seen a grizzly sow with two cubs a mile south of the ranch buildings.

My pen & note paper were lost in my bag, hence these scant notes. Flew out July 4.

Sorenson Ranch, 10 mi. SE Dixon, Yolo Co., Calif.

Nov 20, 1977

♂ 1802 Common snipe (*Capella gallinago*) 99 gms.

Orinda, Contra Costa Co., Calif.

Nov. 21, 1977

♀ 1803 *Neotoma fuscipes* 417-209-42-33 327 gms.

Prewitz Ridge, Los Padres Nat. Forest, Monterey Co., Calif.

Nov. 21, 1979

♀ 1804 Mountain quail 232 gms. Col. D. Pine

♂ 1805 Mountain quail 231 gms. Col. D. Pine

Sorenson Ranch, 10 mi. SE Dixon, Yolo Co., Calif.

Dec. 22, 1979

♂ 1806 European wigeon 769 gms. Col. D. Teeguarden

Conaway Ranch, 5 mi. SE Woodland, Yolo Co., Calif.

Jan 29, 1980

♂ 1807 Ring-necked pheasant 1760 gms. Testis 9 mm.

712 The Alameda, Berkeley, Alameda Co., Calif.

Feb 1, 1980

♀ 1808 Mourning dove 117 gms. Ova 1 mm.

8 mi. W Arbuckle, Colusa Co., Calif.

Jan. 19, 1980

♀ 1809 California quail 145 gms.

♂ 1810 California quail 156 gms. ! Test. 4 mm.

400 Vermont, Berkeley, Calif.

Jan. 23, 1980

♀ 1811 Sharp-shinned hawk 151 gms.
(hit a window)

Tomas State Park, Marin Co., Calif.

July 20, 1979

♂ juv. 1812 California quail (road hill) 105 gm. Col. P. Gogan

♂ juv. 1813 California quail (road hill) 104 gm Col. P. Gogan

San Francisco Bay near Richmond, Contra Costa Co., Calif.

December?, 1979

♂ 1814 Ruddy duck Col. J. Zeegarden

